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ABSTRACT

This Holocaust curriculum project is designed for a 10th grade world cultures class that meets for 80 minutes per day during one semester. The students use selected primary sources including poems, diary excerpts, and a short novel written by victims and survivors of the Holocaust. They also examine profiles about the rescuers. Additional documentaries and films also may be integrated into the unit as time and resources permit. The curriculum project is divided into the following sections: (1) "Introduction"; (2) "Objectives"; (3) "Teaching Strategy"; (4) "Materials"; (5) "Questions"; (6) "Evaluation"; (7) "Appendix A: Selected Poems"; (8) "Appendix B: 'Learning about the Holocaust: A Resource Booklet for Students'" which also contains a Holocaust chronology; (9) "Appendix C: Diary Excerpt from the Lodz Ghetto"; (10) "Appendix D: Diary Excerpt written by Mary Berg"; (11) "Appendix E: Profile on Jan Karski"; (12) "Appendix F: Profile on Gustav Mikulai"; and (13) "Appendix G: Profile on Alex and Mela Rosen." (Contains 23 references.) (BT)

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Fulbright-Hays Curriculum Project:

Using Primary Sources to Develop an Understanding About the Holocaust:

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October 25, 1998

SO 030 773

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INTRODUCTION:

This project corresponds with the travel and lectures I participated in as a recipient of a Fulbright-Hays Award during the summer of 1998. As a result of the Fulbright-Hays Award, I have developed a Holocaust unit in which students will utilize poems, diary excerpts, and a short novel written by victims and survivors of the Holocaust. To conclude the unit, students will also examine various profiles about rescuers. Additional documentaries and films may also be utilized as available. [e.g. *Night and Fog* or *Schindler's List*]

I intend to implement this unit into my World Cultures class. The World Cultures course is required for all 10th grade students at North Hills High School. The class meets for 80 minutes a day during one semester. A typical problem for most instructors of World Cultures is the abundance of information to cover in a limited amount of time and this project adds to this problem. My solution is to substitute some of the time spent on the World Wars for time to be spent on the Holocaust. I have found that my students are entering into class with a strong working knowledge of World War I and World War II from their 9th grade American History course. Consequently, I will have my students work on World War II independently, through a series of review questions that will focus on the major facets of the war as covered in their textbook. During the class periods, normally reserved for World War II, I will introduce and work on materials about the Holocaust. The material that is new to the students will be covered in class while the out-of-class work will be mostly review.

OBJECTIVES:

The main objectives are as follows:

- Define the term Holocaust and how it applies to World War II.
- Identify the reasoning behind the Nazi goal to eliminate "inferior races."
- Identify the means by which the Nazis carried out their goal.
- Determine how several individuals reacted to the Holocaust and how the world reacted.
- Examine the conflicts arising between Hitler and the Jewish people of Europe in a specific cultural sphere, Europe between 1933-1945 (majority versus minority group).
- Understand how a government can use concepts such as culture, ethnicity, race, diversity, and nationality as weapons to persecute, murder, and annihilate people.
- Read and comprehend various types of literature and poetry from the Holocaust.
- Recognize the deeds of heroism demonstrated by children, teenagers, and adults in ghettos and concentration camps.

- Study how people living under Nazi control used art as a form of resistance (art including poetry, diaries, sketches, etc.).

A secondary goal is to compare the fate of Jews in Hungary and Poland during World War II by studying the lives of a men, women, and children from both Hungary and Poland. In studying both men and women, children and teenagers, I hope to present a broad balance of how the Holocaust affected the complete family unit and society. By using specific illustrations from Hungary and Poland, I can utilize my travel by showing students pictures of what remains of the ghettos and concentration camps.

TEACHING STRATEGIES:

The following is a broad sketch of how I intend to teach about the Holocaust to high school students. I have broken the unit down into five main phases. After reviewing these materials, if you do not think that you could use the entire unit, because of the class time required, I invite you to pick out a phase that fits for your class and curriculum. I strongly encourage you to use phases two (2) and four (4) though. The second (2) phase will provide students the intellectual foundation for the defining and comprehending the Holocaust. The fourth (4) phase utilizes a novel written by Elie Wiesel, a survivor of Auschwitz. *Night* is a phenomenal story of the human spirit triumphing over the forces of evil.

Phase 1

Introduce unit by having each student read a different poem written by a child in the Terezin Camp. Through a class discussion, identify the various attributes about camp life that the authors try to convey to the reader through the poetry. The class will also create a list of conditions, emotions, desires, and fate (or expected future) from the poetry.

The poems I have chosen to use are collected from the Terezin (Theresienstadt) ghetto located outside Prague, Czech Republic. A total of 15,000 children under the age of fifteen passed through the Terezin Concentration Camp between 1942-1944; less than 100 survived. (I Have Not Seen a Butterfly Around Here, 11)

There are many sources available for Holocaust poetry. I have chosen to use the Terezin collection for several reasons. The Terezin collection of poetry is easily available and well known.

Terezin was considered a model camp and was used to show foreigners how prisoners and Jews were being treated during the war. It became a stop for prisoners

before they were sent to Auschwitz. Over 15,000 children went through the Terezin camp. (Volavkova, 102) Only 100 came back. These children used art and poetry to escape the harsh realities of camp life.

I also had the opportunity to visit the camp during the summer of 1998. I have some documents and pictures of the camp to use in class.

Citation for sources:

I Have Not Seen a Butterfly Around Here: Children's Drawings and Poems From Terezin. Prague: The Jewish Museum, 1993.

Volavkova, Hana (ed.) . . . I Never Saw Another Butterfly. . . New York: Schocken Books, 1993.

Estimated class time:
1 class period

Phase 2

For the second phase, students will be working from Learning About the Holocaust: A Resource Booklet for Students. As a class we will need to work through the information contained in this pamphlet. This can done in many ways, depending upon personal teaching style and audience. I will use a combination of lectures, discussions, study guides, and films to highlight the material.

I have included a copy of the Learning About the Holocaust: A Resource Booklet for Students in Appendix B for your convenience.

Citation for source:

Learning About the Holocaust: A Resource Booklet for Students. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1993.

Estimated class time:
3 class periods

Phase 3

For the next phase of the unit, students will be reading a diary excerpt. In an out of class assignment, that can be done while we are working in the second phase Learning About the Holocaust, students will be reading a brief diary excerpt. From these diaries, students will be able to see what daily life was like in the camps, in the ghettos, or in hiding. Using Laurel Holliday's Children in the Holocaust and World War II: Their Secret Diaries, students will read an assigned diary excerpt. In small

groups of three (3) students each, the group will review the diary and discuss the reading with the group. (Group sizes will be dependent upon class size, but I would like to see groups of 3 students working on the same diary excerpt.)

Suggested selections are listed below by author, country, and age. The first five selections, listed below, are 6-14 pages in length which might be a good choice for lower-level readers. Selections six through nine are at least 20 pages in length. I particularly enjoyed the short reading by The Unknown Brother and Sister of Lodz Ghetto and the excerpt written by Mary Berg. The Berg excerpt is quite fascinating in that Mary is an American who survives the Warsaw Ghetto. She is able to smuggle the diary out when she is released in a prisoner exchange. The brief selection is full of details about life in the ghetto.

1. Ephraim Shtenkler, Poland, 11 years old,
2. Janina Heshele, Poland, 12 years old
3. Dawid Rubinowicz, Poland, 12 years old
4. Sarah Fishkin, Poland, 17 years old
5. The Unknown Brother and Sister of Lodz Ghetto, unknown age and 12 years old
6. Janine Phillips, Poland, 10 years old
7. Eva Heyman, Hungary, 13 years old
8. Mary Berg, Poland, 15 years old,
9. Hannah Senesh, Hungary and Israel, 17 years old

Again I have included a copies of two diary selections in Appendix C and D. Appendix C is the seven page except from The Unknown Brother and Sister of Lodz Ghetto. This diary is brief, but powerful. It is easy to read and requires little prior knowledge about the Holocaust. An excerpt from Mary Berg's diary is also found in Appendix D.

Citation for source:
Holliday, Laurel. Children in the Holocaust and World War II: Their Secret Diaries. New York: Washington Square Press, 1995.

Estimated class time:
2 class periods

Phase 4
Students will be reading the novel, Night, by Elie Wiesel. I use the novel, Night, by Elie Wiesel, because of the central theme of the autobiography *never to forget*. As a survivor of the concentration camps, Wiesel is determined to document his past and to keep alive the memories which turned a civilized society into a

systematic killing mechanism.

As a social studies teacher, it is my goal to prepare young people to be educated, active citizens. The Holocaust left an indelible mark on everyone who lived through it, the politicians, the generals, the soldiers, and the world. By reading Elie Wiesel's Night, the students will get a powerful and moving account of one teenager's experience in the concentration camps. Also, the themes of prejudice, racism, and extreme nationalism are found throughout history and in the Holocaust. If students were to have the opportunity to read Night, perhaps they will regain their ability to understand those who are different and invoke compassion for others not like oneself.

Elie Wiesel, the recipient of the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize, is a remarkable man, known for his perseverance, strength, and dignity. Wiesel is active today in encouraging people around the world to be more tolerant of others through his sponsorship of a national scholarship for high school students.

Night, by Elie Wiesel, is a wonderful learning tool for students because the student is transported into the mind and life of an average family living in Eastern Europe during World War II. World War II dramatically changed Europe and the globe as new technologies were used in the name of war on men, women, and children without discrimination. The story is compelling, compassionate, vivid, and heartbreaking. I love to use Wiesel's story in a classroom setting because it is written in a style that is enjoyable for students to read, filled with information, but unforgettable.

Citation for source:
Wiesel, Elie. Night. New York: Bantam Books, 1960.

Estimated class time:
4-6 class periods

Phase 5
To complete this unit on the Holocaust and to bring bring some closure for this dramatic unit, the students will be reading a 3-5 page profile on a rescuer. I hope that this profile will help address the students' questions such as "How could this have happened?" and "Why didn't anyone try to stop the Holocaust?"

Listed below are the names of ten(10) Polish and Hungarian rescuers profiled in the book Rescuers: Portraits of Moral Courage in the Holocaust. In order to maximize the efforts of the class and to learn about more than one rescuer, students will work in small groups of 2-3 people, the same groups that were used for the diary excerpts.

Students will read the profile individually, work with their group to compile information about the specific profile, and share the information in a class discussion. The profiles vary in length, but they run usually 3-6 pages.

The profile on Jan Karski is my personal favorite. The account given by Jan Karski is wonderful. It is filled with daunting acts of heroism, daring escapes, and painful memories. Mr. Karski currently lives in the U.S. and teaches at Georgetown University. I have included a copy of his profile in Appendix F. I have also included the profile of Gustav Mikulai's , Appendix G, because I think some students will relate well to his sense of humor. A final profile is included on Alex and Mela Roslan. I felt it was important to include the Roslan profile because it includes the discussion about the boys who were saved by the Roslan's. The Roslan profile also highlights the conflicts that arose after the war when some people are able to emigrate to Israel and others are not able.

1. Zofia Baniecka
2. Gertruda Babilinska
3. Jan Karski
4. Agnieszka Budna-Widerschal
5. Stefnia Podgorska Burzminski
6. Alex and Mela Roslan
7. Irene Gut Opdyke
8. Stefan Raczynski
9. Malka Csizmadia
10. Gustav Mikulai

Citation for source:
Block, Gay and Malka Drucker. Rescuers: Portraits of Moral Courage in the Holocaust. New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1992.

Estimated class time:
1-2 class periods

MATERIALS:
These sources are the foundation for the unit. It is essential that every students has his/her own copy of the following:

1. Learning About the Holocaust: A Resource Booklet for Students. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1993.

2. Wiesel, Elie. Night. New York: Bantam Books, 1960.

I have included a copy of Learning About the Holocaust: A Resource Booklet for

Students in Appendix B so it can be copied at minimal cost. I intend to use this pamphlet in place of my textbook to for the authoritative source on the Holocaust.

Elie Wiesel's Night is found in most bookstores and runs under five dollars for the soft back. So if you are limited in time, I encourage you to use these two sources.

The other sources that I will be utilizing should be on file in the library or with the instructor so students can pick up a read a short selection. It would be wonderful to have classroom copies available, but I realize that financial restrictions are a factor. The more copies available, the more access students will have to the materials.

Block, Gay and Malka Drucker. Rescuers: Portraits of Moral Courage in the Holocaust. New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1992.

Holliday, Laurel. Children in the Holocaust and World War II: Their Secret Diaries. New York: Washington Square Press, 1995.

I Have Not Seen a Butterfly Around Here: Children's Drawings and Poems From Terezin. Prague: The Jewish Museum, 1993.

Volavkova, Hana (ed.) . . . I Never Saw Another Butterfly. . . New York: Schocken Books, 1993. Washington Square Press, 1995.

I also suggest that you contact the Holocaust Memorial Museum for sources such as:

- Learning About the Holocaust: A Resource Booklet for Students. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1993.
- Teaching About the Holocaust: A Resource Book for Educators. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1993.

Resources Center for Educators
U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW
Washington, D.C. 20024-2126

Telephone: (202) 488-2661
Fax: (202) 314-7888 fax
e-mail: education@ushmm.org
web site: <http://www.ushmm.org/>

QUESTIONS:
Listed below is a series of questions that can be used to further student study on this subject. Depending upon time constraints, students could study a particular aspect of the Holocaust around each of these questions.

- What spiritual resistance is evident in the materials read?
- What moral choices, or absence of choices, were confronted by the young and old in the readings?
- Why did the Nazis' censor the fine arts and literature during this period?
- To what extent was the Jewish culture able to survive and maintain its traditions and institutions following the Holocaust?
- Identify other examples of discriminative public policy.
- Identify U.N. and/ or U.S. Government efforts to develop and adopt human rights bills.
- Reflect upon the moral and ethical implications of the Holocaust as a watershed event in world history.
- Examine the close ties between science and technology and government policy. Identify examples of a nation utilizing its scientific expertise to the detriment of mankind.

EVALUATION:

Evaluating student understanding on this unit will include writing samples, testing assessment, student feedback, interest generated, and class and community discussions.

Integrating pieces of literature into historical context is a personal objective I have for my classes. I would like to "turn on" students to history through the human experiences of history where there are heroes and villains, royalty and peasants, good and evil, and life and death. I hope that through these primary and secondary sources, students develop a better understanding of the Holocaust and what it meant to live through this period.

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The Warsaw Ghetto: The 50th Anniversary of the Uprising. Warsaw: Drukarnia Naukowo-Techniczna, 1993.

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Appendix A:

Selected poems from the Terezin Camp

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AT TEREZIN

When a new child comes
Everything seems strange to him.
What, on the ground I have to lie?
Eat black potatoes? No! Not I!
I've got to stay? It's dirty here!
The floor—why, look, it's dirt, I fear!
And I'm supposed to sleep on it?
I'll get all dirty!

Here the sound of shouting, cries.
And oh, so many flies.
Everyone knows flies carry disease.
Oooh, something bit me! Wasn't that a bedbug?
Here in Terezin, life is hell
And when I'll go home again, I can't yet tell.

Teddy
L 410, 1943

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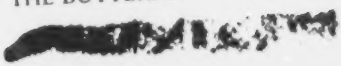
THE BUTTERFLY



The last, the very last,
So richly, brightly, dazzlingly yellow.
Perhaps if the sun's tears would sing
against a white stone. . . .

Such, such a yellow
Is carried lightly 'way up high.
It went away I'm sure because it wished to
kiss the world good-bye.

For seven weeks I've lived in here,
Penned up inside this ghetto.
But I have found what I love here.
The dandelions call to me
And the white chestnut branches in the court.
Only I never saw another butterfly.

That butterfly was the last one.
Butterflies don't live in here,
in the ghetto.

4. 6. 1942 Pavel Friedmann

18

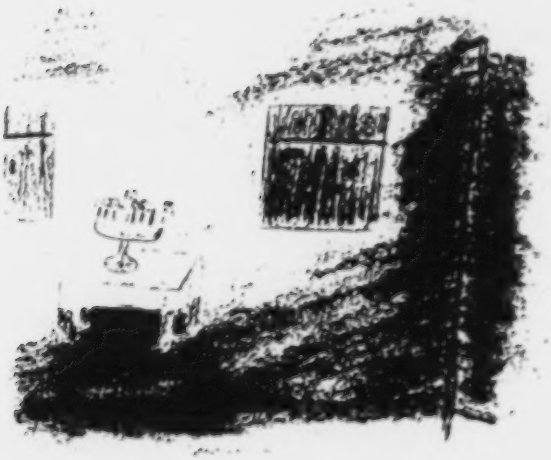
HOMESICK

I've lived in the ghetto here for more than a year.
In Terezin, in the black town now,
And when I remember my old home so dear,
I can love it more than I did, somehow.

Ah, home, home,
Why did they tear me away?
Here the weak die easy as a feather
And when they die, they die forever.

I'd like to go back home again,
It makes me think of sweet spring flowers.
Before, when I used to live at home,
It never seemed so dear and fair.

I remember now those golden days . . .
But maybe I'll be going there soon again.



People walk along the street,
You see at once on each you meet
That there's ghetto here,
A place of evil and of fear.
There's little to eat and much to want,
Where bit by bit, it's horror to live.
But no one must give up!
The world turns and times change.

Yet we all hope the time will come
When we'll go home again.
Now I know how dear it is
And often I remember it.

9. III. 1943 Anonymous

20

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TEREZIN

That bit of filth in dirty walls,
And all around barbed wire
And 30,000 souls who sleep
Who once will wake
And once will see
Their own blood spilled.

I was once a little child
Three years ago
That child who longed for other worlds
But now I am no more a child
For I have learned to hate
I am a grown-up person now.
I have known fear.

Bloody words and a dead day then,
That's something different than bogie man!

But anyway, I still believe I only sleep today,
That I'll wake up, child again, and start to laugh and play
I'll go back to childhood sweet like a briar rose,
Like a bell which wakes us from a dream,
Like a mother with an ailing child
Loves him with aching woman's love
How tragic, then, is youth which lives
With enemies, with gallows ropes,
How tragic, then, for children on your lap
To say: this for the good, that for the bad.

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Somewhere, far away out there, childhood
sweetly sleeps.
Along that path among the trees,
There o'er that house
Which was once my pride and joy
There my mother gave me birth into this world
So I could weep

In the flame of candles by my bed, I sleep
And once perhaps I'll understand
That I was such a little thing,
As little as this song

These 30,000 souls who sleep
Among the trees will wake
Open eyes
And because they see
A lot

They'll fall asleep again

HANUŠ HACHENBURG 12.7.1929 – 10.12.7.1944

22

NIGHT IN THE GHETTO

Another day has gone for keeps
Into the bottomless pit of time.
Again it has wounded a man, held captive
by his brethren.
After dusk, he longs for bandages,
For soft hands to shield the eyes
From all the horrors that stare by day.
But in the ghetto, darkness, too, is kind
To weary eyes that all day long
have had to watch.

Dawn crawls again along the ghetto streets
Embracing all who walk this way.
Only a car like a greeting from a long-gone world
Gobbles up the dark with fiery eyes—
That sweet darkness that falls upon the soul
And heals those wounds illumined by the day . . .
Along the streets come light and ranks of people
Like a long black ribbon, loomed with gold.

1943 Anonymous

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We got used to standing in line at seven o'clock in the morning, at twelve noon, and again at seven o'clock in the evening. We stood in a long queue with a plate in our hand, into which they ladled a little warmed-up water with a salty or a coffee flavor. Or else they gave us a few potatoes. We got used to sleeping without a bed, to saluting every uniform, not to walk on the sidewalks and then again to walk on the sidewalks. We got used to undeserved slaps, blows, and executions. We got accustomed to seeing people die in their own excrement, to seeing piled-up coffins full of corpses, to seeing the sick amid dirt and filth and to seeing the helpless doctors. We got used to it that from time to time, one thousand unhappy souls would come here and that, from time to time, another thousand unhappy souls would go away. . . .

From the prose of fifteen-year-old Petr Fischl (born September 9, 1929), who perished in Auschwitz in 1944

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TEREZÍN

That bit of filth in dirty walls,
And all around barbed wire,
And 30,000 souls who sleep
Who once will wake
And once will see
Their own blood spilled.

I was once a little child,
Three years ago.
That child who longed for other worlds.
But now I am no more a child
For I have learned to hate.
I am a grown-up person now,
I have known fear,

Bloody words and a dead day then,
That's something different than bogie man!

But anyway, I still believe I only sleep today,
That I'll wake up, child again, and start to laugh and play.
I'll go back to childhood sweet like a briar rose,
Like a bell which wakes us from a dream,
Like a mother with an ailing child
Loves him with aching woman's love.
How tragic, then, is youth which lives
With enemies, with gallows ropes,
How tragic, then, for children on your lap
To say: this for the good, that for the bad.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Somewhere, far away out there, childhood
sweetly sleeps.
Along that path among the trees,
There o'er that house
Which was once my pride and joy
There my mother gave me birth into this world
So I could weep...

In the flame of candles by my bed, I sleep
And once perhaps I'll understand
That I was such a little thing,
As little as this song.

These 30,000 souls who sleep
Among the trees will wake,
Open eyes
And because they see
A lot

They'll fall asleep again...

HANUŠ HACHENBURG 12.7.1929 – 10. 12.7.1944

QUESTIONS, AND AN ANSWER

What use are human art and science?
Beauty of women, fresh as May?
What use, a world that's mere illusion?
What use, the sun, when there's no day?

What is God for? Only to chasten?
Or a new humankind to fashion?
Or are we merely beasts who suffer
To rot beneath the yoke of passion?

What is life for, if life is torment,
The world a rampart against light?
Know, son, all things are as they are here
That you may be a man! And fight!

HANUŠ HACHENBURG 12.7.1929 – 10.12.7.1944

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FEAR

Today the ghetto knows a different fear,
Close in its grip, Death wields an icy scythe.
An evil sickness spreads a terror in its wake,
The victims of its shadow weep and writhe.

Today a father's heartbeat tells his fright
And mothers bend their heads into their hands.
Now children choke and die with typhus here,
A bitter tax is taken from their bands.

My heart still beats inside my breast
While friends depart for other worlds.
Perhaps it's better – who can say?
Than watching this, to die today?

No, no, my God, we want to live!
Not watch our numbers melt away.
We want to have a better world,
We want to work – we must not die!

EVA PICKOVÁ, 15 5 1929 - 18 12 1943

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Appendix B:

Learning About the Holocaust: A Resource Booklet for Students

UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

Dear Student:

Thank you for requesting "Learning about the Holocaust: A Resource Booklet for Students." This packet contains three historical readings, a chronology, and a bibliography to assist you with further research. If you requested information about a specific Holocaust-related topic, additional materials have been enclosed with this packet.

Other research tools are available on the Museum's website <http://www.ushmm.org/>, including the databases of the Museum's Library, Archives, and Photo Archives.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact us in one of the following ways:

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Sincerely,

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Resource Center Staff

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Frequently Asked Questions

The brief answers offered here are only meant as an introduction to the complex history of the Holocaust. Scholars have spent years writing and researching about these questions.

1. What was the Holocaust?

The Holocaust was the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims – six million were murdered; Gypsies, the handicapped, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons. Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny.

2. Who were the Nazis?

"Nazi" is a short term for the National Socialist German Workers Party, a right-wing political party formed in 1919 primarily by unemployed German veterans of World War I. Adolf Hitler became head of the party in 1921, and under his leadership the party eventually became a powerful political force in German elections by the early 1930s. The Nazi party ideology was strongly anti-Communist, antisemitic, racist, nationalistic, imperialistic, and militaristic.

In 1933, the Nazi Party assumed power in Germany, and Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor. He ended German democracy and severely restricted basic rights such as freedom of speech, press, and assembly. He established a brutal dictatorship through a reign of terror. This created an atmosphere of fear, distrust, and suspicion in which people betrayed their neighbors and which helped the Nazis to obtain the acquiescence of social institutions such as the civil service, the educational system, churches, the judiciary, industry, business, and other professions.

3. Why did the Nazis want to kill large numbers of innocent people?

The Nazis believed that Germans were "racially superior" and that there was a struggle for survival between them and "inferior races." Jews, Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), and the handicapped were seen as a serious biological threat to the purity of the "German (Aryan) Race" and therefore had to be "exterminated." The Nazis blamed the Jews for Germany's defeat in World War I, for its economic problems, and for the spread of Communist parties throughout Europe. Slavic peoples (Poles, Russians, and others) were also considered "inferior" and destined to serve as slave labor for their German masters. Communists, socialists, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, and Freemasons were

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persecuted, imprisoned, and often killed on political and behavioral (rather than racial) grounds. Sometimes the distinction was not very clear. Millions of Soviet prisoners of war perished from starvation, disease, and forced labor or were killed for racial or political reasons.

4. How did the Nazis carry out their policy of genocide?

In the late 1930s the Nazis killed thousands of handicapped Germans by lethal injection and poisonous gas. After the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, mobile killing units following in the wake of the German Army began shooting massive numbers of Jews and Gypsies in open fields and ravines on the outskirts of conquered cities and towns. Eventually the Nazis created a more secluded and organized method of killing enormous numbers of civilians – six extermination centers were established in occupied Poland, where large-scale murder by gas and body disposal through cremation were conducted systematically. Victims were deported to these centers from German-occupied western Europe and from the ghettos in eastern Europe that the Nazis had established. In addition, millions died in the ghettos and concentration camps as a result of forced labor, starvation, exposure, brutality, disease, and execution.

5. How did the world respond to the Holocaust?

The United States and Great Britain as well as other nations outside Nazi Europe received numerous press reports in the 1930s about the persecution of Jews. By 1942 the governments of the United States and Great Britain had confirmed reports about "the final solution" – Germany's intent to kill all the Jews of Europe. However, influenced by antisemitism and fear of a massive influx of refugees, neither country modified their refugee policies. Their stated intention to defeat Germany militarily took precedence over rescue efforts, and therefore no specific attempts to stop or slow the genocide were made until mounting pressure eventually forced the United States to undertake limited rescue efforts in 1944.

In Europe, rampant antisemitism incited citizens of many German-occupied countries to collaborate with the Nazis in their genocidal policies. There were, however, individuals and groups in every occupied nation who, at great personal risk, helped hide those targeted by the Nazis. One nation, Denmark, saved most of its Jews in a nighttime rescue operation in 1943 in which Jews were ferried in fishing boats to safety in neutral Sweden.

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The Holocaust:
A Historical Summary

The Holocaust was the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims – six million were murdered; Gypsies, the handicapped, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons. Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny.

The concentration camp is most closely associated with the Holocaust and remains an enduring symbol of the Nazi regime. The first camps opened soon after the Nazis took power in January 1933; they continued as a basic part of Nazi rule until May 8, 1945, when the war, and the Nazi regime, ended. The events of the Holocaust occurred in two main phases: 1933-1939 and 1939-1945.

I. 1933-1939

On January 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler was named Chancellor, the most powerful position in the German government, by the aged President Hindenburg, who hoped Hitler could lead the nation out of its grave political and economic crisis. Hitler was the leader of the right-wing National Socialist German Workers Party (called the "Nazi Party" for short); it was, by 1933, one of the strongest parties in Germany, even though – reflecting the country's multiparty system – the Nazis had only won a plurality of 33 percent of the votes in the 1932 elections to the German parliament (*Reichstag*).

Once in power, Hitler moved quickly to end German democracy. He convinced his cabinet to invoke emergency clauses of the Constitution that permitted the suspension of individual freedoms of press, speech, and assembly. Special security forces – the Special State Police (the *Gestapo*), the Storm Troopers (SA), and the Security Police (SS) – murdered or arrested leaders of opposition political parties (Communists, socialists, and liberals). The Enabling Act of March 23, 1933, forced through a *Reichstag* already purged of many political opponents, gave dictatorial powers to Hitler.

Also in 1933, the Nazis began to put into practice their racial ideology. Echoing ideas popular in Germany as well as most other western nations well before the 1930s, the Nazis believed that the Germans were "racially superior" and that there was a struggle for survival between them and "inferior races." They saw Jews, Roma (Gypsies), and the

handicapped as a serious biological threat to the purity of the "German (Aryan[1]) Race," what they called the "master race."

Jews, who numbered nearly 600,000 in Germany (less than one percent of the total population in 1933), were the principal target of Nazi hatred. The Nazis mistakenly identified Jews as a race and defined this race as "inferior." They also spewed hate-mongering propaganda that unfairly blamed Jews for Germany's economic depression and the country's defeat in World War I (1914-1918).

In 1933, new German laws forced Jews to quit their civil service jobs, university and law court positions, and other areas of public life. In April 1933, a boycott of Jewish businesses was instituted. In 1935, laws proclaimed at Nuremberg made Jews second-class citizens. These "Nuremberg Laws" defined Jews not by their religion or by how they wanted to identify themselves but by the religious affiliation of their grandparents. Between 1937 and 1939, new anti-Jewish regulations segregated Jews further and made daily life very difficult for them: Jews could not attend public schools, go to theaters, cinemas, or vacation resorts, or reside, or even walk, in certain sections of German cities.

Also between 1937 and 1939, Jews were forced from Germany's economic life: the Nazis either seized Jewish businesses and properties outright or forced Jews to sell them at bargain prices. In November 1938, this economic attack against German and Austrian[2] Jews changed into the physical destruction of synagogues and Jewish-owned stores, the arrest of Jewish men, the destruction of homes, and the murder of individuals. This centrally organized riot (pogrom) became known as *Kristallnacht* (the "Night of Broken Glass").

Although Jews were the main target of Nazi hatred, the Nazis persecuted other groups they viewed as racially or genetically "inferior." Nazi racial ideology was buttressed by scientists who advocated "selective breeding" (eugenics) to "improve" the human race. Laws passed between 1933 and 1935 aimed to reduce the future number of genetic "inferiors" through involuntary sterilization programs: about 500 children of mixed (African-German) racial backgrounds[3] and 320,000 to 350,000 individuals judged physically or mentally handicapped were subjected to surgical or radiation procedures so they could not have children. Supporters of sterilization also argued that the handicapped

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[1] The term "Aryan" originally referred to peoples speaking Indo-European languages. The Nazis perverted its meaning to support racist ideas by viewing those of Germanic background as prime examples of Aryan stock, which they considered racially superior. For the Nazis, the typical Aryan was blond, blue-eyed, and tall.

[2] On March 11, 1938, Hitler sent his army into Austria, and on March 13 the incorporation (*Anschluss*) of Austria with the German empire (*Reich*) was proclaimed in Vienna. Most of the population welcomed the *Anschluss* and expressed their fervor in widespread riots and attacks against the Austrian Jews numbering 180,000 (90 percent of whom lived in Vienna).

[3] These children, called "the Rhineland bastards" by Germans, were the offspring of German women and African soldiers from French colonies who were stationed in the 1920s in the Rhineland, a demilitarized zone the Allies established after World War I as a buffer between Germany and western Europe.

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burdened the community with the costs of their care. Many of Germany's 30,000 Gypsies were also eventually sterilized and prohibited, along with Blacks, from intermarrying with Germans. Reflecting traditional prejudices, new laws combined traditional prejudices with the new racism of the Nazis which defined Gypsies, by "race," as "criminal and asocial."

Another consequence of Hitler's ruthless dictatorship in the 1930s was the arrest of political opponents and trade unionists and others the Nazis labeled "undesirables" and "enemies of the state." Some five- to fifteen thousand homosexuals were imprisoned in concentration camps; under the 1935 Nazi-revised criminal code, the mere denunciation of a man as "homosexual" could result in arrest, trial, and conviction. Jehovah's Witnesses, who numbered 20,000 in Germany, were banned as an organization as early as April 1933, since the beliefs of this religious group prohibited them from swearing any oath to the state or serving in the German military. Their literature was confiscated, and they lost jobs, unemployment benefits, pensions, and all social welfare benefits. Many Witnesses were sent to prisons and concentration camps in Nazi Germany, and their children were sent to juvenile detention homes and orphanages.

Between 1933 and 1936, thousands of people, mostly political prisoners and Jehovah's Witnesses, were imprisoned in concentration camps, while several thousand German Gypsies were confined in special municipal camps. The first systematic round-ups of German and Austrian Jews occurred after *Kristallnacht*, when approximately 30,000 Jewish men were deported to Dachau and other concentration camps and several hundred Jewish women were sent to local jails. At the end of 1938, the waves of arrests also included several thousand German and Austrian Gypsies. Between 1933 and 1939, about half the German Jewish population and more than two-thirds of Austrian Jews (1938-39) fled Nazi persecution. They emigrated mainly to Palestine, the United States, Latin America, Shanghai (which required no visa for entry), and eastern and western Europe (where many would be caught again in the Nazi net during the war). Jews who remained under Nazi rule were either unwilling to uproot themselves or unable to obtain visas, sponsors in host countries, or funds for emigration. Most foreign countries, including the United States, Canada, Britain, and France, were unwilling to admit very large numbers of refugees.

II. 1939-1945

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland and World War II began. Within days, the Polish army was defeated, and the Nazis began their campaign to destroy Polish culture and enslave the Polish people, whom they viewed as "subhuman." Killing Polish leaders was the first step: German soldiers carried out massacres of university professors, artists, writers, politicians, and many Catholic priests. To create new living space for the "superior Germanic race," large segments of the Polish population were resettled, and German families moved into the emptied lands. Thousands of other Poles, including

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Jews, were imprisoned in concentration camps. The Nazis also "kidnapped" as many as 50,000 "Aryan-looking" Polish children from their parents and took them to Germany to be adopted by German families. Many of these children were later rejected as not capable of Germanization and sent to special children's camps, where some died of starvation, lethal injection, and disease.

As the war began in 1939, Hitler initialed an order to kill institutionalized, handicapped patients deemed "incurable." Special commissions of physicians reviewed questionnaires filled out by all state hospitals and then decided if a patient should be killed. The doomed were then transferred to six institutions in Germany and Austria, where specially constructed gas chambers were used to kill them. After public protests in 1941, the Nazi leadership continued this euphemistically termed "euthanasia" program in secret. Babies, small children, and other victims were thereafter killed by lethal injection and pills and by forced starvation.

The "euthanasia" program contained all the elements later required for mass murder of European Jews and Gypsies in Nazi death camps: an articulated decision to kill, specially trained personnel, the apparatus for killing by gas, and the use of euphemistic language like "euthanasia" that psychologically distanced the murderers from their victims and hid the criminal character of the killings from the public.

In 1940 German forces continued their conquest of much of Europe, easily defeating Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France. On June 22, 1941, the German army invaded the Soviet Union and by September was approaching Moscow. In the meantime, Italy, Romania, and Hungary had joined the Axis powers led by Germany and opposed by the Allied Powers (British Commonwealth, Free France, the United States, and the Soviet Union).

In the months following Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, Jews, political leaders, Communists, and many Gypsies were killed in mass executions. The overwhelming majority of those killed were Jews. These murders were carried out at improvised sites throughout the Soviet Union by members of mobile killing squads (*Einsatzgruppen*) who followed in the wake of the invading German army. The most famous of these sites was Babi Yar, near Kiev, where an estimated 33,000 persons, mostly Jews, were murdered. German terror extended to institutionalized handicapped and psychiatric patients in the Soviet Union; it also resulted in the mass murder of more than three million Soviet prisoners of war.

World War II brought major changes to the concentration camp system. Large numbers of new prisoners, deported from all German-occupied countries, now flooded the camps. Often entire groups were committed to the camps, such as members of underground resistance organizations who were rounded up in a sweep across western Europe under the 1941 "Night and Fog" decree. To accommodate the massive increase in the number of prisoners, hundreds of new camps were established in occupied territories of eastern and western Europe.

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During the war, ghettos, transit camps, and forced labor camps, in addition to the concentration camps, were created by the Germans and their collaborators to imprison Jews, Gypsies, and other victims of racial and ethnic hatred as well as political opponents and resistance fighters. Following the invasion of Poland, three million Polish Jews were forced into approximately 400 newly established ghettos, where they were segregated from the rest of the population. Large numbers of Jews were also deported from other cities and countries, including Germany, to ghettos in Poland and German-occupied territories further east.

In Polish cities under Nazi occupation, like Warsaw and Lodz, Jews were confined in sealed ghettos where starvation, overcrowding, exposure to cold, and contagious diseases killed tens of thousands of people. In Warsaw and elsewhere, ghettoized Jews made every effort, often at great risk, to maintain their cultural, communal, and religious lives. The ghettos also provided a forced labor pool for the Germans, and many forced laborers (who worked on road gangs, in construction, or other hard labor related to the German war effort) died from exhaustion or maltreatment.

Between 1942 and 1944, the Germans moved to eliminate the ghettos in occupied Poland and elsewhere, deporting ghetto residents to "extermination camps" – killing centers equipped with gassing facilities – located in Poland. After the meeting of senior German government officials in late January 1942 at a villa in the Berlin suburb of Wannsee, the decision to implement "the final solution of the Jewish question" became formal state policy, and Jews from western Europe were also sent to killing centers in the East.

The six killing sites, chosen because of their closeness to rail lines and their location in semi-rural areas, were at Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Chelmno, Majdanek, and Auschwitz-Birkenau. Chelmno was the first camp in which mass executions were carried out by gas, piped into mobile gas vans; 320,000 persons were killed there between December 1941 and March 1943 and between June to July 1944. A killing center using gas vans and later gas chambers operated at Belzec, where more than 600,000 persons were killed between May 1942 and August 1943. Sobibor opened in May 1942 and closed one day after a rebellion of the prisoners on October 14, 1943; up to 200,000 persons were killed by gassing. Treblinka opened in July 1942 and closed in November 1943; a revolt by the prisoners in early August 1943 destroyed much of the facility. At least 750,000 persons were killed at Treblinka, physically the largest of the killing centers. Almost all of the victims at Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka were Jews; a few were Gypsies. Very few individuals survived these four killing centers, where most victims were murdered immediately after arrival.

Auschwitz-Birkenau, which also served as a concentration camp and slave labor camp, became the killing center where the largest numbers of European Jews and Gypsies were killed. After an experimental gassing there in September 1941 of 250 malnourished and ill Polish prisoners and 600 Russian POWs, mass murder became a daily routine; more than 1.25 million people were killed at Auschwitz-Birkenau, 9 out of 10 of them Jews. In

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addition, Gypsies, Soviet POWs, and ill prisoners of all nationalities died in the gas chambers. Between May 14 and July 8, 1944, 437,402 Hungarian Jews were deported to Auschwitz in 48 trains. This was probably the largest single mass deportation during the Holocaust. A similar system was implemented at Majdanek, which also doubled as a concentration camp and where at least 275,000 persons were killed in the gas chambers or died from malnutrition, brutality, and disease.

The methods of murder were the same in all the killing centers, which were operated by the SS. The victims arrived in railroad freight cars and passenger trains, mostly from ghettos and camps in occupied Poland, but also from almost every other eastern and western European country. On arrival, men were separated from women and children. Prisoners were forced to undress and hand over all valuables. They were then driven naked into the gas chambers, which were disguised as shower rooms, and either carbon monoxide or Zyklon B (a form of crystalline prussic acid, also used as an insecticide in some camps) was used to asphyxiate them. The minority selected for forced labor were, after initial quarantine, vulnerable to malnutrition, exposure, epidemics, medical experiments, and brutality; many perished as a result.

The Germans carried out their systematic murderous activities with the active help of local collaborators in many countries and the acquiescence or indifference of millions of bystanders. However, there were instances of organized resistance. For example, in the fall of 1943, the Danish resistance, with the support of the local population, rescued nearly the entire Jewish community in Denmark from the threat of deportation to the east by smuggling them via a dramatic boatlift to safety in neutral Sweden. Individuals in many other countries also risked their lives to save Jews and other individuals subject to Nazi persecution. One of the most famous was Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat who led the rescue effort that saved the lives of tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews in 1944.

Resistance movements existed in almost every concentration camp and ghetto of Europe. In addition to the armed revolts at Sobibor and Treblinka, Jewish resistance in the Warsaw ghetto led to a courageous uprising in April-May 1943, despite a predictable doomed outcome because of superior German force. In general, rescue or aid to Holocaust victims was not a priority of resistance organizations whose principal goal was to fight the war against the Germans. Nonetheless, such groups and Jewish partisans (resistance fighters) sometimes cooperated with each other to save Jews. On April 19, 1943, for instance, members of the National Committee for the Defense of Jews, in cooperation with Christian railroad workers and the general underground in Belgium, attacked a train leaving the Belgian transit camp of Malines headed for Auschwitz and succeeded in assisting several hundred Jewish deportees to escape.

After the war turned against Germany and the Allied armies approached German soil in late 1944, the SS decided to evacuate outlying concentration camps. The Germans tried to cover up the evidence of genocide and deported prisoners to camps inside Germany to prevent their liberation. Many inmates died during the long journeys on foot known as

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"death marches." During the final days, in the spring of 1945, conditions in the remaining concentration camps exacted a terrible toll in human lives. Even concentration camps never intended for extermination, such as Bergen-Belsen, became death traps for thousands, including Anne Frank, who died there of typhus in March 1945.

In May 1945, Nazi Germany collapsed, the SS guards fled, and the camps ceased to exist as extermination, forced labor, or concentration camps. Some of the concentration camps, including Bergen-Belsen, Dachau, and Landsberg, all in Allied-occupied Germany, were turned into camps for displaced persons (DPs), which included former Holocaust victims unable to be repatriated.

The Nazi legacy was a vast empire of murder, pillage, and exploitation that had affected every country of occupied Europe. The toll in lives was enormous. The full magnitude, and the moral and ethical implications, of this tragic era are only now beginning to be understood more fully.

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Children and the Holocaust

Up to one-and-a-half million children were murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators between 1933 and 1945. The overwhelming majority of them were Jewish. Thousands of Roma (Gypsy) children, disabled children, and Polish children were also among the victims.

The deaths of these children were not accidental: they were the deliberate result of actions taken by the German government under the leadership of Chancellor Adolf Hitler. The children were killed in various ways. Many were shot; many more were asphyxiated with poisonous gas in concentration camps or subjected to lethal injections. Others perished from disease, starvation, exposure, torture, and/or severe physical exhaustion from slave labor. Still others died as a result of medical experiments conducted on them by German doctors in the camps.

During the Holocaust, children – ranging in age from infants to older teens – were, like their parents, persecuted and killed not for anything they had done. Rather, Hitler and the Nazi government believed that so-called "Aryan" Germans were a superior race. The Nazis labeled other people they considered inferior as "non-Aryans." People belonging to non-Aryan groups, including children, were targeted by the Nazis for elimination from German society. The Nazis killed children to create a biologically pure society.

Even children who fit the Aryan stereotype suffered at the hands of the Nazis during World War II. Non-Jewish children in occupied countries whose physical appearance fit the Nazi notion of a "master race" (fair skin, blond-haired, blue-eyed) were at times kidnapped from their homes and taken to Germany to be adopted by German families. As many as 50,000 Polish children alone may have been separated from their families in this manner. Some of these children were later rejected and sent to special children's camps where they died of starvation or as a result of the terrible living conditions within the camps. Others were killed by lethal injections at the concentration camps of Majdanek and Auschwitz.

The experiences of children who were victims of Nazi hatred varied widely. Factors such as age, gender, family wealth, and where a child lived affected their experiences under German domination. Generally, babies and younger children deported to ghettos and camps had almost no chance of surviving. Children in their teens, or younger children who looked more mature than their years, had a better chance of survival since they might be selected for slave labor rather than for death. Some teens participated in resistance activities as well.

Children who were victims of the Holocaust came from all over Europe. They had different languages, customs, and religious beliefs. Some came from wealthy families; others from poor homes. Many ended their schooling early to work in a craft or trade; others looked forward to continuing their education at the university level. Still, whatever

their differences, they shared one commonality: by the 1930s, with the rise of the Nazis to power in Germany, they all became potential victims and their lives were forever changed.

Nazi Germany, 1933-39

Soon after the Nazis gained power in Germany, Jewish children found life increasingly difficult. Due to legislation prohibiting Jews from engaging in various professions, their parents lost jobs and businesses. As a result, many families were left with little money. Jewish children were not allowed to participate in sports and social activities with their "Aryan" classmates and neighbors. They could not go to museums, movies, public playgrounds, or even swimming pools. Even when they were permitted to go to school, teachers often treated them with scorn and encouraged their humiliation by other students. Frequently, Jewish students were subject to being taunted and teased, picked upon and beaten up. Eventually, Jewish and Gypsy children were expelled from German schools.

Gypsy children, like Jewish children, faced many hardships in Nazi Germany. Along with their parents, they were rounded up and forced to live behind barbed wire in special municipal internment camps under police guard. Beginning in 1938, Gypsy teenagers were arrested and sent to concentration camps.

Murder Under Cover of War

With the outbreak of World War II in September 1939, life became much harder for children all over Europe. European children of all backgrounds suffered because of the war, experiencing displacement, inadequate diets, the absence of fathers and brothers, loss of family members, trauma, and confusion. However, only certain groups of children were singled out for "extinction."

Wartime, Hitler suggested, "was the best time for the elimination of the incurably ill." Among the first victims of the Nazis were disabled persons, and children were not exempt. Many Germans, influenced by Nazi ideas, did not want to be reminded of individuals who did not measure up to their idealized concept of a "master race." The physically and mentally handicapped were viewed by the Nazis as unproductive to society, a threat to Aryan genetic purity, and ultimately unworthy of life. Beginning almost simultaneously with the start of World War II, a "euthanasia" program was authorized personally by Adolf Hitler to systematically murder disabled Germans. Like disabled adults, children with disabilities were either injected with lethal drugs or asphyxiated by inhaling carbon monoxide fumes pumped into sealed mobile vans and gas chambers. Medical doctors cooperated in these so-called "mercy killings" in six institutions, and secretly at other centers, in Germany. Though some were Jewish, most of the children murdered in this fashion were non-Jewish Germans.

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With the onset of war, Jewish children in Germany suffered increasing deprivations. Nazi government officials confiscated many items of value from Jewish homes, including radios, telephones, cameras, and cars. Even more importantly, food rations were curtailed for Jews as were clothing ration cards. Jewish children felt more and more isolated. Similarly, as Germany conquered various European countries in their war effort – from Poland and parts of the Soviet Union in the east, to Denmark, Norway, Belgium, France, and the Netherlands in the west – more and more Jewish children came under German control and, with their parents, experienced persecution, forced separations, and very often, murder.

Throughout eastern Europe, Jewish families were forced to give up their homes and relocate into ghettos – restricted areas set up by the Nazis as "Jewish residential districts." Most of the ghettos were located in German-occupied Poland; most were established in the poorer, more dilapidated sections of towns and cities. Ghettos were fenced in, typically with barbed wire or brick walls. Entry and exit were by permit or pass only; like a prison, armed guards stood at gates. Families inside the ghettos lived under horrid conditions. Typically, many families would be crowded into a few rooms where there was little if any heat, food, or privacy. It was difficult to keep clean. Many people in the ghettos perished from malnutrition, starvation, exposure, and epidemics. Typhus, a contagious disease spread by body lice, was common, as was typhoid, spread through contaminated drinking water.

Some children managed to escape deportation to ghettos by going into hiding with their families or by hiding alone, aided by non-Jewish friends and neighbors. Children in hiding often took on a secret life, sometimes remaining in one room for months or even years. Some hid in woodpiles, attics, or barns; others were locked in cupboards or concealed closets, coming out infrequently and only at night. Boys had it more difficult, because they were circumcised and could therefore be identified.

Children were often forced to live lives independent of their families. Many children who found refuge with others outside the ghettos had to assume new identities and conform to local religious customs that were different from their own in order to survive. Some Jewish children managed to pass as Catholics and were hidden in Catholic schools, orphanages, and convents in countries across Europe.

Everyday, children became orphaned and many had to take care of even younger children. In the ghettos of Warsaw and other cities, many orphans lived on the streets, begging for bread and food from others in the ghetto who likewise had little or none to spare. Exposed to severe weather, frostbite, disease, and starvation, these children did not survive for long. Many froze to death.

In order to survive, children had to be resourceful and make themselves useful. In Lodz, healthy children could survive by working. Small children in the largest ghetto in occupied Poland, Warsaw, sometimes helped smuggle food to their families and friends

by crawling through narrow openings in the ghetto wall. They did so at considerable risk, as smugglers who were caught were severely punished.

Deportation to Concentration Camps

The Nazis started emptying the ghettos in 1942 and deporting the victims to concentration camps. Children were often the target of special round-ups for deportation to the camps. The victims were told they were being resettled in the "East." The journey to the camps was difficult for everyone. Jammed into rail cars until there was no room for anyone to move, young children were often thrown on top of other people. Suffocating heat in the summer and freezing cold in the winter made the deportation journey even more brutal. During the trip, which often lasted several days, there was no food except for what people managed to bring along. There were also no water or bathroom facilities and parents were powerless to defend their children.

Two concentration camps (Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek) and four other camps (Chelmno, Sobibor, Belzec, and Treblinka) functioned as "killing centers." All were located near railroad lines in occupied Poland, and poison gas – either carbon monoxide or Zyklon B – was the primary weapon of murder. At Chelmno, Sobibor, Belzec, and Treblinka, nearly everyone was killed soon after arrival. At Auschwitz and Majdanek, individuals were "selected" to live or to die. Stronger, healthier people – including many teenagers – were often selected for slave labor, forced to work eleven-hour shifts with minimum provisions for clothing, food, and shelter. Some who survived the camp "selection" process were used for medical experiments by German physicians.

The great majority of people deported to killing centers did not survive. For those who did survive the selection process, children and adults alike, life in the camps presented new challenges, humiliations, and deprivations. One became a prisoner: clothing and all possessions were removed. Hair was shaved off. Ill-fitting prison uniforms were distributed. One's name was replaced with a number often tattooed on the arm. Many people scarcely recognized their own family members after they had been processed in the camps.

Camp "inmates" were crowded into barracks fitted with wooden bunk beds stacked three or four on top of each other, and several people had to fit per level on the plank beds that had neither mattresses nor blankets. Lice were everywhere and contributed to the spread of disease, which was an ever-present enemy. Standing in roll calls for extended periods in all kinds of weather and working long hours took its toll on everyone. Daily rations of food consisted of a small piece of bread and coffee or soup. As a result of these brutal living conditions, many people died. Few lasted more than a month or two. Even among those that survived, one's vulnerability to "selection" had not ended at the point of arrival. The sick, the feeble, and those too exhausted to work were periodically identified and selected for gassing.

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Liberation

Near the end of the war in 1945, the German concentration camps were liberated by Allied soldiers. By this time, many of the children who had entered camps as teenagers were now young adults. For most, the food and gestures of kindness offered by liberating soldiers were the links to life itself. Children who had survived in hiding now searched the camps trying to locate family members who might also have survived. Returning to hometowns, they had hopes that a former neighbor might know of other survivors.

It was rare for an entire family to survive the Holocaust. One or both parents were likely to have been killed; brothers and sisters had been lost; grandparents were dead. Anticipated reunions with family members gave surviving children some hope, but for many, the terrible reality was that they were now alone. Many found themselves sole survivors of once large extended families. A few were eventually able to locate missing family members.

Life as it had been before the Holocaust was forever altered. Though some individual survivors attempted to return to their former places of residence, Jewish and Gypsy communities no longer existed in most of Europe. Family homes had, in many instances, been taken over by others; personal possessions had been plundered. Because returning to one's home in hopes of reclaiming what had been lost was fraught with extreme danger, many young survivors eventually ended up instead in children's centers or displaced persons camps.

The future was as uncertain as the present was unstable. Many young people had had their schooling interrupted and could not easily resume their studies. Merely surviving took precedence over other concerns. Owning nothing and belonging nowhere, many children left Europe and, with assistance provided by immigrant aid societies or sponsorship from relatives abroad, they emigrated, usually to the United States, South Africa, and/or Palestine which, after 1948, became the State of Israel. There, in these newly adopted countries, they slowly developed new lives.

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Chronology

January 30, 1933
Adolf Hitler is appointed Chancellor of Germany.

February 28, 1933
German government takes away freedom of speech, assembly, press, and freedom from invasion of privacy (mail, telephone, telegraph) and from house search without warrant.

March 4, 1933
Franklin D. Roosevelt is inaugurated President of the United States.

March 20, 1933
First concentration camp opens at Dachau, Germany, for political opponents of the regime.

April 1, 1933
Nationwide boycott of Jewish-owned businesses in Germany is carried out under Nazi leadership.

April 7, 1933
Law excludes "non-Aryans" from government employment; Jewish civil servants, including university professors and schoolteachers, are fired in Germany.

May 10, 1933
Books written by Jews, political opponents of Nazis, and many others are burned during huge public rallies across Germany.

July 14, 1933
Law passed in Germany permitting the forced sterilization of Gypsies, the mentally and physically disabled, African-Germans, and others considered "inferior" or "unfit."

October 1934
First major wave of arrests of homosexuals occurs throughout Germany, continuing into November.

April 1935
Jehovah's Witnesses are banned from all civil service jobs and are arrested throughout Germany.

September 15, 1935
Citizenship and racial laws are announced at Nazi party rally in Nuremberg.

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March 7, 1936
Hitler's army invades the Rhineland.

July 12, 1936
First German Gypsies are arrested and deported to Dachau concentration camp.

August 1-16, 1936
Olympic Games take place in Berlin. Anti-Jewish signs are removed until the Games are over.

March 13, 1938
Austria is annexed by Germany.

July 6-15, 1938
Representatives from thirty-two countries meet at Evian, France, to discuss refugee policies. Most of the countries refuse to let in more Jewish refugees.

November 9-10, 1938
Nazis burn synagogues and loot Jewish homes and businesses in nationwide pogroms called *Kristallnacht* ("Night of Broken Glass"). Nearly 30,000 German and Austrian Jewish men are deported to concentration camps. Many Jewish women are jailed.

November 15, 1938
All Jewish children are expelled from public schools. Segregated Jewish schools are created.

December 2-3, 1938
All Gypsies in the Reich are required to register with the police.

March 15, 1939
German troops invade Czechoslovakia.

June 1939
Cuba and the United States refuse to accept Jewish refugees aboard the ship *S.S. St. Louis*, which is forced to return to Europe.

September 1, 1939
Germany invades Poland; World War II begins.

October 1939
Hitler extends power of doctors to kill institutionalized mentally and physically disabled persons in the "euthanasia" program.

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Spring 1940
Germany invades and defeats Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and France.

October 1940
Warsaw ghetto is established.

March 22, 1941
Gypsy and African-German children are expelled from public schools in the Reich.

March 24, 1941
Germany invades North Africa.

April 6, 1941
Germany invades Yugoslavia and Greece.

June 22, 1941
German army invades the Soviet Union. The *Einsatzgruppen*, mobile killing squads, begin mass murders of Jews, Gypsies, and Communist leaders.

September 23, 1941
Soviet prisoners of war and Polish prisoners are killed in Nazi test of gas chambers at Auschwitz in occupied Poland.

September 28-29, 1941
Nearly 34,000 Jews are murdered by mobile killing squads at Babi Yar, near Kiev (Ukraine).

October-November 1941
First group of German and Austrian Jews are deported to ghettos in eastern Europe.

December ", 1941
Japan attacks Pearl Harbor.

December 8, 1941
Gassing operations begin at Chelmno "extermination" camp in occupied Poland.

December 11, 1941
Germany declares war on the United States.

January 20, 1942
Fifteen Nazi and government leaders meet at Wannsee, a section of Berlin, to discuss the "final solution to the Jewish question."

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1942
Nazi "extermination" camps located in occupied Poland at Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec, and Majdanek-Lublin begin mass murder of Jews in gas chambers.

June 1, 1942
Jews in France and the Netherlands are required to wear identifying stars.

April 19-May 16, 1943
Jews in the Warsaw ghetto resist with arms the Germans' attempt to deport them to the Nazi extermination camps.

August 2, 1943
Inmates revolt at Treblinka.

Fall 1943
Danes use boats to smuggle most of the nation's Jews to neutral Sweden.

October 14, 1943
Inmates at Sobibor begin armed revolt.

January 1944
President Roosevelt sets up the War Refugee Board at the urging of Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr.

March 19, 1944
Germany occupies Hungary.

May 15-July 9, 1944
Over 430,000 Hungarian Jews are deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where most of them are gassed.

June 6, 1944
Allied powers invade western Europe on D-Day.

July 20, 1944
German officers fail in an attempt to assassinate Hitler.

July 23, 1944
Soviet troops arrive at Majdanek concentration camp.

August 2, 1944
Nazis destroy the Gypsy camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau; around 3,000 Gypsies are gassed.

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October 7, 1944
Prisoners at Auschwitz-Birkenau revolt and blow up one crematorium.

January 17, 1945
Nazis evacuate Auschwitz; prisoners begin "death marches" toward Germany.

January 27, 1945
Soviet troops enter Auschwitz.

April 1945
U.S. troops liberate survivors at Buchenwald and Dachau concentration camps.

April 30, 1945
Hitler commits suicide in his bunker in Berlin.

May 5, 1945
U.S. troops liberate Mauthausen concentration camp.

May 7, 1945
Germany surrenders, and the war ends in Europe.

November 1945-October 1946
War crimes trials held at Nuremberg, Germany

May 14, 1948
State of Israel is established.

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Appendix C:

Diary excerpt from the Lodz Ghetto

The Unknown Brother and Sister of Lodz Ghetto

POLAND — UNKNOWN AGE AND 12 YEARS OLD

It is likely that many more children wrote about their suffering at the hands of the Nazis than we will ever know. With little to do, and their playmates and family members taken from them, how better to comfort themselves than to write about what they were going through. Sadly, although hundreds of children may have written them, few diaries survived the bombings, the fires, and the Nazi pillaging and made their way into the hands of future generations.

In honor of the children who wrote but whose work has been lost forever, this anthology concludes with the diaries of a brother and a sister whose names, like so many child diarists', will remain unknown.

Orphaned by the Nazis, the children lived in the Lodz

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Ghetto in Poland, where they were forced into slave labor. The little girl was twelve years old when she began her diary in July of 1944, several weeks after her older brother started his. The little girl's diary itself was never found, but her brother copied the first two entries of it into his own diary, which is reproduced here.

Amazingly, the boy wrote in four different languages, all scrunched into the margins of an old French novel, presumably because he did not have access to any other paper.

After the war was over, a man named Avraham Benkel, who had miraculously survived Auschwitz, returned to his home in the Lodz Ghetto, where he and his murdered family had lived. His and all surrounding houses had been systematically plundered by vandals looking for "Jewish treasure." In the house next door to his, he found that only one thing had been left behind—a tattered copy of an old French novel in which he discovered the boy's diary written in the margins.

There were no clues about who the boy was, but Avraham Benkel treasured his writing and took it with him when he moved to Israel in 1949. There, he turned it over to the historical archives of Yad Vashem, the Jewish Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem, where it remains today in a locked vault as a memorial to the unknown children of the Holocaust.

The following entries from the children's diaries were published in Yad Vashem News in 1970.

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Unknown Girl

(AS COPIED INTO HER BROTHER'S DIARY)

July 11, 1944

Many a time in the past I began to write my memoirs, but by unforeseen circumstances, I was prevented from putting this mind-easing and soul comforting practice into reality, to begin [to write] of those days when cares and sufferings were unknown to me. I must look back to those bygone days, for my today is quite dissimilar to those which went away.

Childhood, dear days,
Alas, so few they were!
That dimly only I remember them.
It is only in my dreams that I'm
Allowed to imagine days bygone.
Short indeed is human happiness
In this world of ours!

Unknown Boy

May 5, 1944

I committed this week an act which is best able to illustrate to what degree of dehumanization we have been reduced. Namely, I finished up my loaf of bread at a space of three days, that is to say on Sunday, so I had to wait till the next Saturday for a new one. [The ration was about 33 ounces of bread a week.] I was terribly hungry. I had a prospect of living only from the ressort soups [the soup ladled out to

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forced laborers] which consist of three little potato pieces and two dekagrams [three quarters of an ounce] of flower [sic]. I was lying on Monday morning quite dejectedly in my bed and there was the half loaf of bread of my darling sister. I could not resist the temptation and ate it up totally. I was overcome by a terrible remorse of conscience and by a still greater care for what my little one would eat for the next five days. I felt a miserably helpless criminal. I have told people that it was stolen by a supposed reckless and pitiless thief and, for keeping up appearance, I have to utter curses and condemnations on the imaginary thief. "I would hang him with my own hands had I come across him."

[Several days later]

After my fantasy of writing in various languages, I return to my own tongue, to Yiddish, to *mammeloshon*, because only in Yiddish am I able to give clear expression, directly and without artificiality, to my innermost thoughts. I am ashamed that I have for so long not valued Yiddish properly. Yet even if I could rob Homer, Shakespeare, Goethe and Dante of their muses, would I be capable of describing what we suffer, what we sense, what we experience, what we are living through? Is it humanly possible? It is as possible to describe our suffering as to drink up the ocean or to embrace the earth. I don't know if we will ever be believed.

[End of May]

Despair increases steadily as does the terrible hunger, the like of which mankind has never yet suffered. With complete assurance we may say that they have not left us even a jot of that which is called body or soul.

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In truth, the world deserves only that we spit in its face and do as Arthur Zygelboim did. [He committed suicide.] ... Sudden death, hunger, deportation, interrogations, labor, queues, etc., etc. wreak havoc in the ruined vineyard of Israel, among the poor remnant. Will you, O God, keep silent? How can you, having seen it? Send your wrath against these savages, against this scum of humanity, and wipe them out from under your heavens. Let their mothers be bereaved as they have caused Jewish mothers to be bereaved for no cause at all, guiltless Jewish mothers. Let the verse come to pass: "Blessed is he that seizes and smashes on the rock those that have tortured you."

Eh, God, why do you allow it?
Why let them say
You were neutral?
In the heat of your anger
The same that makes
A harvest of us,
Are we the sinners
And they the righteous?
Can it be?
Is that the truth?
After all, you have enough
Intelligence to understand
That it is not thus:
That we are the sinned against
And they are the guilty.

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[Undated]

We are suffering so much. The old man was savagely beaten up by Biebow. [Hans Biebow, German commander of the ghetto, hanged for his crimes in April 1947.] He had to be taken to the hospital. Five hundred people are to be deported. Again a kind of uncertainty overwhelmed everyone. Have we all gone through all this suffering in order to be liquidated now in their infamous way? Why didn't we die in the first days of the war? My little sister complains of losing the will to live. How tragic. She is only twelve years old! Will there be an end to our suffering? When and how, great heavens! Humanity, where are you?

[Undated]

We are so tired of "life." I was talking with my little sister of twelve and she told me: "I am very tired of this life. A quick death would be a relief for us." O world! World! What have those innocent children done that they are treated in such a manner? Truly, humanity has not progressed very far from the cave of the wild beast.

Thank heavens that I'm no realist for to be a realist is to realize and realizing the whole horror of our situation would have been more than any human being could endure. I go on dreaming, dreaming about survival and about getting free in order to be able to "tell" the world, to yell and "rebuke," to tell and to protest.

July 31, 1944

My after all human heart is cut to pieces when I perceive how terrible my little sister is tormented. She lost literally everything—no stockings, no clothes . . . no tenderness. O

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you poor orphan, and what you have to suffer by my unjust treatment, because of my destroyed nerves. You, poor being, must help yourself with substitutes: instead of stockings some rags, instead of boots some wooden contrivance.... God seems to have abandoned us totally and left us entirely to the mercy of the heartless fiends. Almighty God, how can you do this?

August 3, 1944

When I look on my little sister my heart is melting. Hasn't the child suffered its part? She has fought so heroically the last five years. When I look on our cosy little room tidied up by the young intelligent poor being I am getting saddened by the thought that soon she and I will have to leave our last particle of home.

Oh God in heaven, why didst thou create Germans to destroy humanity? I don't even know if I shall be allowed to be together with my sister. I cannot write more. I am resigned terribly and black spirited.

[Last entry. Undated.]

Although I write a broken and hesitant Hebrew, I cannot but write Hebrew, for Hebrew is the language of the future, because I shall use Hebrew as a Jew standing proudly upright in the Land of Israel!

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Appendix D:

Diary excerpt written by Mary Berg

Mary Berg (pseudonym)

POLAND — 15 YEARS OLD

Mary Berg, a girl with American citizenship, was living in Poland with her parents at the beginning of the Nazi occupation. Although she alludes to having written in a diary earlier, her published diary begins on her fifteenth birthday, October 10, 1939. A year later, she was imprisoned in the Warsaw Ghetto despite the fact that her mother was not a Jew and was, in fact, an American.

In the ghetto, Mary witnessed and wrote of such horrors that it is almost inconceivable that she could have kept her sanity. But she never stopped recording what the Nazis did to her family, her friends, and her neighbors. Finally, she was informed that she and her mother were to be exchanged for German prisoners and that they would be released from Nazi custody.

Mary Berg's diary is a detailed eyewitness record of the atrocities committed in the Warsaw Ghetto. As such, it is an invaluable historical document. Because the Nazis had searched and looted every inch of the compound for three years, they didn't bother to

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search Mary when she was released. She was able to smuggle her huge diary out of the Warsaw Ghetto right under the noses of the Third Reich.

After being interned with other American citizens for a time in France, Mary and her family eventually were allowed to go to America, where she translated the diary from Polish into English and made arrangements to have it published when she was twenty years old. Only a few libraries in the world contain Mary's diary, which is called Warsaw Ghetto: A Diary. It was published in New York by J. B. Fischer Publishing Corporation in 1945.

October 10, 1939

Today I am fifteen years old. I feel very old and lonely, although my family did all they could to make this day a real birthday. They even baked a macaroon cake in my honor, which is a great luxury these days. My father ventured out into the street and returned with a bouquet of Alpine violets. When I saw it I could not help crying.

I have not written my diary for such a long time that I wonder if I shall ever catch up with all that has happened. This is a good moment to resume it. I spend most of my time at home. Everyone is afraid to go out. The Germans are here.

I can hardly believe that only six weeks ago my family and I were at the lovely health resort of Ciechocinek, enjoying a carefree vacation with thousands of other visitors. I had no idea then what was in store for us. I got the first inkling of our future fate on the night of August 29 when the raucous

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blare of the giant loud-speaker announcing the latest news stopped the crowds of strollers in the streets. The word "war" was repeated in every sentence. Yet most people refused to believe that the danger was real, and the expression of alarm faded on their faces as the voice of the loud-speaker died away.

My father felt differently. He decided that we must return to our home in Lodz. In almost no time our valises stood packed and ready in the middle of the room. Little did we realize that this was only the beginning of several weeks of constant moving about from one place to another.

We caught the last train which took civilian passengers to Lodz. When we arrived we found the city in a state of confusion. A few days later it was the target of severe German bombardments.

We spent most of our time in the cellar of our house. When word came that the Germans had broken through the Polish front lines and were nearing Lodz, panic seized the whole population. At eleven o'clock at night crowds began to stream out of the city in different directions. Less than a week after our arrival from Ciechocinek we packed our necessities and set out once more.

Up to the very gates of the city we were uncertain which direction we should take—toward Warsaw or Brzeziny? Finally, along with most of the other Jews of Lodz, we took the road to Warsaw. Later we learned that the refugees who followed the Polish armies retreating in the direction of Brzeziny had been massacred almost to a man by German planes.

Among the four of us, my mother, my father, my sister, and I, we had three bicycles, which were our most precious

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possessions. Other refugees who attempted to bring with them things that had been valuable in the life they had left behind were compelled to discard them. As we advanced we found the highway littered with all sorts of objects, from fur coats to cars abandoned because of the lack of gasoline. We had the good luck to acquire another bicycle from a passing peasant for the fantastic sum of two hundred zlotys, and we hoped it would enable us to move together with greater speed. But the roads were jammed, and gradually we were completely engulfed in the slow but steady flow of humanity toward the capital.

Mile after mile it was the same. The fields withered in the terrible heat. The gigantic cloud of dust raised by the vanguard of refugees swept over us, blotting out the horizon and covering our faces and clothes with successive layers of dust. Again and again we flung ourselves into the ditches on the side of the road, our faces buried in the earth, while planes roared in our ears. During the night huge patches of red flared up against the black dome of the sky. The fires of burning cities and villages rose all around us.

When we arrived in Lowicz, the city was one huge conflagration. Burning pieces of wood fell on the heads of the refugees as they forced their way through the streets. Fallen telephone poles barred our path. The sidewalks were cluttered with furniture. Many people were burned in the terrible flames. The odor of scorched human flesh pursued us long after we had left the city.

By September 9 the supply of food we had taken from home was used up. There was nothing whatever to be had along the way. Weak from hunger, my mother fainted on the road. I dropped beside her, sobbing wildly, but she showed

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no sign of life. In a daze, my father ran ahead to find some water, while my younger sister stood stock-still, as if paralyzed. But it was only a passing spell of weakness.

In Sochaczew we managed to get a few sour pickles and some chocolate cookies that tasted like soap. This was all we had to eat the entire day. Finding a drink of water was almost as difficult as procuring food. All the wells along the way were dried up. Once we found a well filled with murky water, but the villagers warned us not to drink from it because they were sure it had been poisoned by German agents. We hurried on in spite of our parched lips and aching throats.

Suddenly we saw a little blue plume of smoke rising from the chimney of a house at the side of the road. We had found all the other houses along the road deserted, but here was a sign of life. My father rushed in and returned with a huge kettle, but there was a strange expression on his face. In a trembling voice he told us what he had found, and for a while we could not bring ourselves to touch that precious water. . . . He had found the kettle on a stove in which the fire was lit. Near by, on a bed, a man was lying with his face turned to the wall. He seemed to be sleeping peacefully, so my father called out to him several times. But there was no answer. Then he walked over to the sleeping peasant and saw that he was dead. The bed was full of blood. The window panes were peppered with bullet holes.

The kettle which we "inherited" from this murdered peasant became our faithful companion on the long road to Warsaw. As we neared the capital we met the first German prisoners of war walking along the highway, led by Polish soldiers. This sight was encouraging to us, yet the Germans

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did not seem cast down by their condition. They wore elegant uniforms; they smiled insolently. They knew they would not be prisoners for very long.

We had our first taste of cooked food in Okecie, a suburb of Warsaw. A few soldiers in a deserted building shared their potato soup with us. After four days and nights of seemingly endless traveling, we realized for the first time how tired we were. But we had to go on. There was not a moment to lose, for as we left Okecie we saw men and women building barricades with empty streetcars and cobblestones torn up from the streets, in preparation for the siege of the capital.

In Warsaw we found women standing at the doorways of the houses, handing out tea and bread to the refugees who streamed into the capital in unending lines. And as tens of thousands of provincials entered Warsaw in the hope of finding shelter there, thousands of old-time residents of the capital fled to the country.

Relatives in the heart of Warsaw's Jewish quarter gave us a warm and hearty welcome, but constant air attacks drove us to the cellar during most of our stay with them. By September 12 the Germans began to destroy the center of the city. Once again we had to move, this time to seek better protection against the bombs.

The days that followed brought hunger, death, and panic to our people. We could neither eat nor sleep. At first, in a new home on Zielna Street, we knew real comfort. The owners had fled the city, leaving a clean apartment for our use. There was even a maid to give us hot tea, and for the first time since our flight from Lodz we ate a real meal served on a table covered with a white cloth. It included herring, tomatoes, butter, and white bread. To get this bread my fa-

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ther had to stand for hours on a long line in front of a bakery. As he waited there, several German planes suddenly swooped down and strafed the people with machine guns. Instantly the line in front of the bakery dispersed, but one man remained. Disregarding the firing, my father took his place behind him. A moment later the man was hit in the head by a bullet. The entrance to the bakery shop was now free and my father made his purchase.

After this supper we listened to a broadcast in which an American reporter described the Nazi methods of warfare to his American listeners. "I stood in a field and from a distance saw a woman digging potatoes. Beside her was a little child. Suddenly a German plane swooped down, firing at the unarmed woman, who fell at once. The child was not hit. He bent over his fallen mother and wept heart-rendingly. Thus another orphan was added to the many war orphans of Poland. President Roosevelt!" he exclaimed in a deep voice, "I beg of you, help these mothers who are digging potatoes for their children; help these children whose mothers are falling on the peaceful fields; help Poland in her hour of trial!" But no help came.

Our house at 31 Zielna Street was next to the telephone building, which was a target for the German guns throughout the siege. Although struck by many shells, the lofty and solidly built structure was only slightly damaged and the telephone girls remained at their posts. Many houses nearby were destroyed, and again we had to spend our nights in the cellar. Then one of the bombs exploded in the front room of our apartment, and we were forced to return to the crowded home of our relatives.

I shall never forget September 23, the date of the Day of

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Atonement in 1939. The Germans deliberately chose that sacred Jewish holiday for an intensive bombardment of the Jewish district. In the midst of this bombardment a strange meteorological phenomenon took place: heavy snow mixed with hail began to fall in the middle of a bright, sunny day. For a while the bombing was interrupted, and the Jews interpreted the snow as a special act of heavenly intervention; even the oldest among them were unable to recall a similar occurrence. But later in the day the enemy made up for lost time with renewed fury.

In spite of the danger, my father and a few other men who lived in our house went to the neighboring synagogue. After a few minutes one of them came running back, his tallith on his head, a prayer book in his hand, and so shaken that for some time he was unable to speak. A bomb had fallen upon the synagogue and many of the worshipers had been killed. Then, to our great joy, my father returned unharmed. White as chalk, and carrying his tallith (prayer shawl) crumpled under his arm, he told us that many of those who only a moment before had been praying at his side had been killed during the service.

That night hundreds of buildings blazed all over the city. Thousands of people were buried alive in the ruins. But ten hours of murderous shelling could not break the resistance of Warsaw. Our people fought with increased stubbornness; even after the government had fled and Marshal Rydz-Smigly had abandoned his troops, men and women, young and old, helped in the defense of the capital. Those who were unarmed dug trenches; young girls organized first-aid squads in the doorways of the houses; Jews and Christians stood shoulder to shoulder and fought for their native land.

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On the last night of the siege we sat huddled in a corner of the restaurant below our house. A few elderly Jews chanted psalms in tearful voices. My mother had wrapped us all in thick blankets to protect us from the tiny splinters that filled the air. When she herself stuck out her head for a moment, she was hit on the forehead by a splinter of shrapnel. Her face was covered with blood, but her wound proved to be only a small scratch. We realized that our shelter was a firetrap, so we set out for Kozla Street to find safer quarters with our relatives, stumbling over the mutilated bodies of soldiers and civilians as we walked. We found only the skeleton of a house rising above a huge cellar packed full of people lying on the concrete floor. Somehow or other they made room for us. Beside me lay a little boy convulsed with pain from a wound. When his mother changed his dressing, one could see that a shell fragment was still embedded in his flesh and that gangrene had already set in. A little further on lay a woman whose foot had been torn off by a bomb. No medical aid was available for these people. The stench was unbearable. The corners were crowded with children wailing piteously. The grownups simply sat or lay motionless, with stony faces and vacant eyes. Hours went by. When daybreak came I was struck by the sudden stillness. My ears, accustomed to the crash of unceasing explosions, began to hum. It was the terrifying silence that precedes a great calamity, but I could not imagine anything worse than what we had already been through. Suddenly someone rushed into the cellar with the news that Warsaw had capitulated. No one stirred, but I noticed tears in the eyes of the grownups. I, too, felt them choking in my throat, but my eyes were dry. So all our sacrifices had been in vain. Twenty-

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seven days after the outbreak of the war, Warsaw, which had held out longer than any other city in Poland, had been forced to surrender.

As we came out of the cellar we saw our ruined city in the clear September sun. Salvage crews were at work removing victims from the wreckage. Those who still showed signs of life were placed on stretchers and carried to the nearest first-aid stations. The dead were heaped upon carts and buried in the nearest empty ground—in the yard of a ruined house or an adjacent square. Soldiers were buried in public parks, and small wooden crosses were placed over their graves.

We returned to our own street. On the pavement lay the carcasses of fallen horses from which people were carving pieces of meat. Some of the horses were still twitching, but the hungry wretches did not notice that; they were cutting the beasts up alive. We found the last place in which we had stayed, our apartment on the Nalewki, intact except for broken window panes. But there was nothing to eat. The janitor invited us to join him in a dinner of duck and rice. Later I learned that this duck was the last swan our janitor had caught in the pond in Krasinski Park. In spite of the fact that this water was polluted by rotting human bodies, we felt no ill effects from that strange meal.

That afternoon a cousin who lived on Sienna Street invited us to share her large apartment, in which she had stored a great deal of food. So we moved once again. It was a nightmarish journey. On all the squares common graves were being dug. Warsaw looked like an enormous cemetery.

Lodz, October 15, 1939

We are again in Lodz. We found our store and our apartment completely looted; the thieves had cut the larger pictures out of their frames. My father is miserable over the loss of the Poussin and the Delacroix he bought in Paris for a considerable sum only a few weeks before the outbreak of the war. We have been here in Lodz for only two days, but we know now that it was a mistake to return here. The Nazis are beginning to intensify their acts of terrorism against the native population, especially the Jews. Last week they set fire to the great synagogue, the pride of the Lodz community. They forbade the Jews to remove the sacred books, and the "shames" or beadle who wanted to save the holy relics was locked up inside the temple and died in the flames. My mother cannot forgive herself for having persuaded my father to bring us back here.

Lodz, November 3, 1939

Almost every day our apartment is visited by German soldiers who, under various pretexts, rob us of our possessions. I feel as if I were in prison. Yet I cannot console myself by looking out of the window, for when I peer from behind the curtain I witness hideous incidents like that which I saw yesterday:

A man with markedly Semitic features was standing quietly on the sidewalk near the curb. A uniformed German approached him and apparently gave him an unreasonable order, for I could see that the poor fellow tried to explain something with an embarrassed expression. Then a few other uniformed Germans came upon the scene and began to beat their victim with rubber truncheons. They called a cab and

tried to push him into it, but he resisted vigorously. The Germans then tied his legs together with a rope, attached the end of the rope to the cab from behind, and ordered the driver to start. The unfortunate man's face struck the sharp stones of the pavement, dyeing them red with blood. Then the cab vanished down the street.

Lodz, November 12, 1939

Percy, my mother's younger brother, has returned from Nazi captivity. Only a miracle saved him from death. On the battlefield, seeing the approaching Nazis, and realizing that his unit had surrendered, he decided to commit suicide. As he was in a medical unit he had all sorts of drugs on his person; he swallowed thirty tablets of Veronal and fell asleep. He lay thus on the open field when suddenly a pouring rain began to fall. This awakened him. "I don't know how it happened," he told us, "but I suddenly began to vomit, and spat up almost all of the poison." He was too weak to move, and soon the Germans picked him up and placed him in a prison camp. Next day, with a comrade, he managed to get through the barbed-wire fence and after wandering for a week in the so-called Kampinowska Forest, made his way to Lodz.

Lodz, November 23, 1939

Today Uncle Percy celebrated his wedding in secret. The Gestapo has officially forbidden Jews to marry, but in defiance of their order the number of Jewish marriages is increasing. It goes without saying that all the marriage certificates are antedated. Because of the dangers which surround us, all the engaged couples want to be together. Moreover everyone

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wonders whether the Nazis will even let him live much longer.

To attend this wedding we slunk one by one like shadows down the few blocks that separated us from the place of the ceremony. A guard stood at the door on the watch for Nazis, so that we could flee through another exit if necessary. The rabbi trembled while reciting the blessing. The slightest rustle on the staircase made us all rush to the door. The general mood was one of terror and apprehension.

April 28, 1940

We have managed to obtain a separate apartment in the same house where we had been sharing rooms. My mother has tacked up her visiting card on the door, with the inscription: "American citizen." This inscription is a wonderful talisman against the German bandits who freely visit all Jewish apartments. As soon as German uniforms come into view at the outer door of our building, our neighbors come begging us to let them in so that they too can benefit from our miraculous sign. Our two little rooms are filled to the brim—for how could we refuse anyone? All of the neighbors tremble with fear, and with a silent prayer on their lips gaze at the two small American flags on the wall.

Jews who possess passports of neutral countries are not compelled to wear arm bands or to do slave labor. No wonder many Jews try to obtain such documents; but not all have the means to buy them or the courage to use them. Two of my friends have acquired papers proving that they are nationals of a South American republic. Thanks to these they can circulate freely in the city. They went boldly to the Gestapo headquarters at the Bruehl Palace to have these pa-

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pers sealed with a swastika, and the German experts did not realize that they were forged. They can even go to the country to buy food. With such documents they have at least a 80 per cent chance of survival—the other Jews have only a 10 percent chance at most.

November 15, 1940 [Warsaw]

Today the Jewish ghetto was officially established. Jews are forbidden to move outside the boundaries formed by certain streets. There is considerable commotion. Our people are hurrying about nervously in the streets, whispering various rumors, one more fantastic than the other.

Work on the walls—which will be three yards high—has already begun. Jewish masons, supervised by Nazi soldiers, are laying bricks upon bricks. Those who do not work fast enough are lashed by the overseers. It makes me think of the Biblical description of our slavery in Egypt. But where is the Moses who will release us from our new bondage?

At the end of those streets in which the traffic has not been stopped completely there are German sentries. Germans and Poles are allowed to enter the isolated quarter, but they must not carry any parcels. The specter of starvation looms up before us all.

January 1, 1941

The ghetto is covered with deep snow. The cold is terrible and none of the apartments are heated. Wherever I go I find people wrapped up in blankets or huddling under feather beds, that is, if the Germans have not yet taken all these warm things for their own soldiers. The bitter cold makes the Nazi beasts who stand guard near the ghetto entrances

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even more savage than usual. Just to warm up as they lurch back and forth in the deep snow, they open fire every so often and there are many victims among the passers-by. Other guards who are bored with their duty at the gates arrange entertainments for themselves. For instance, they choose a victim from among the people who chance to go by, order him to throw himself in the snow with his face down, and if he is a Jew who wears a beard, they tear it off together with the skin until the snow is red with blood. When such a Nazi is in a bad mood, his victim may be a Jewish policeman who stands guard with him.

Yesterday I myself saw a Nazi gendarme "exercise" a Jewish policeman near the passage from the Little to the Big Ghetto on Chłodna Street. The young man finally lost his breath, but the Nazi still forced him to fall and rise until he collapsed in a pool of blood. Then someone called for an ambulance, and the Jewish policeman was put on a stretcher and carried away on a hand truck. There are only three ambulance cars for the whole ghetto, and for that reason hand trucks are mostly used. We call them rickshas.

Snow is falling slowly, and the frost draws marvelous flower patterns on the windowpanes. I dream of a sled gliding over the ice, of freedom. Shall I ever be free again? I have become really selfish. For the time being I am still warm and have food, but all around me there is so much misery and starvation that I am beginning to be very unhappy.

June 12, 1941

The ghetto is becoming more and more crowded; there is a constant stream of new refugees. These are Jews from the provinces who have been robbed of all their possessions.

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Upon their arrival the scene is always the same: the guard at the gate checks the identity of the refugee, and when he finds out that he is a Jew, gives him a push with the butt of his rifle as a sign that he may enter our Paradise. . . .

These people are ragged and barefoot, with the tragic eyes of those who are starving. Most of them are women and children. They become charges of the community, which sets them up in so-called homes. There they die sooner or later.

I have visited such a refugee home. It is a desolate building. The former walls of the separate rooms have been broken down to form large halls; there are no conveniences; the plumbing has been destroyed. Near the walls are cots made of boards and covered with rags. Here and there lies a dirty red feather bed. On the floor I saw half-naked, unwashed children lying listlessly. In one corner an exquisite little girl of four or five sat crying. I could not refrain from stroking her disheveled blond hair. The child looked at me with her big blue eyes, and said: "I'm hungry."

I was overcome by a feeling of utter shame. I had eaten that day, but I did not have a piece of bread to give to that child. I did not dare look in her eyes, and went away.

During the day the grownups go out to look for work. The children, the sick, and the aged remain lying on their cots. There are people from Lublin, Radom, Lodz, and Piotrkow—from all the provinces. All of them tell terrible tales of rape and mass executions. It is impossible to understand why the Germans allow all these people to settle in the Warsaw ghetto which already contains four hundred thousand Jews.

Mortality is increasing. Starvation alone kills from forty to fifty persons a day. But there are always hundreds of new

refugees to take their places. The community is helpless. All the hotels are packed, and hygienic conditions are of the worst. Soap is unobtainable; what is distributed as soap on our ration cards is a gluey mass that falls to pieces the moment it comes into contact with water. It makes one dirty instead of clean.

June 26, 1941

I am writing this in the bomb shelter of our house. I am on night duty, as a member of the home air defense. The Russians are bombing more and more frequently. We are situated in a dangerous spot, close to the main railway station. It is now eleven o'clock. I am sitting near a small carbide lamp. This is the first time since the opening of hostilities between Russia and Germany that I have been able to write. The shock was tremendous. War between Germany and Russia! Who could have hoped it would come so soon!

July 10, 1941

I am full of dire forebodings. During the last few nights, I have had terrible nightmares. I saw Warsaw drowning in blood, together with my sister and my parents. I walked over prostrate corpses. I wanted to flee, but could not, and awoke in a cold sweat, terrified and exhausted. The golden sun and the blue sky only irritate my shaken nerves.

July 29, 1941

The typhus epidemic is raging. Yesterday the number of deaths from this disease exceeded two hundred. The doctors are simply throwing up their hands in despair. There are no medicines, and all the hospitals are overcrowded. New beds

are constantly being added in the wards and corridors, but this does not solve the problem, and the number of victims is growing daily.

The hospital at the corner of Leszno and Rymarska Streets has put up a sign in the window of its office reading: "No vacancies." The Bersom Children's Hospital on Sienna Street is packed with children of various ages, all of them ill with typhus. The hospital at the corner of Leszno and Zelazna Streets has closed its doors; there is no room for even one more patient.

A few days ago, on Leszno Street, I saw a father carrying a fairly grown-up boy in his arms. Both father and son were dressed in rags. The young patient's face was burning red, and he was raving deliriously. As he approached the corner of Leszno and Zelazna Streets, the man stopped hesitatingly in front of the hospital gate. He remained standing there for a while, apparently wondering what to do. Finally, the unfortunate man laid his sick son down on the steps leading to the hospital office and withdrew several paces. The exhausted boy tossed in convulsions and groaned heavily. Suddenly a nurse in a white apron came out and began to berate the grief-stricken father who stood with lowered head, weeping bitterly. After a while I noticed that the sick boy had ceased tossing, as though he had fallen asleep. His eyes were closed and a look of serene contentment was spread over his face.

A few moments later the weeping father cast a glance at his son. He bent over his child and, sobbing brokenheartedly, stared at his face for a long time, as though trying to discover a trace of life in it. But all was over. Soon a little black cart, a free service to the community, appeared, and the still warm

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body of the boy was added to several others that had been picked up in adjoining streets. For some time the father gazed at the cart as it moved away. Then he disappeared.

September 20, 1941

The Nazis are victorious. Kiev has fallen. Soon Himmler will be in Moscow. London is suffering severe bombardments. Will the Germans win this war? No, a thousand times no! Why do not the Allies bomb German cities? Why is Berlin still intact? Germany must be wiped off the face of the earth. Such a people should not be allowed to exist. Not only are the uniformed Nazis criminals, but all the Germans, the whole civilian population, which enjoys the fruits of the looting and murders committed by their husbands and fathers.

September 23, 1941

Alas, our apprehensions before the holidays were justified. Only yesterday, on the eve of Rosh Hashana, the Germans summoned the community representatives with Engineer Czerniakow at their head and demanded that they deliver at once five thousand men for the labor camps. The community refused to obey this order. The Germans then broke into the ghetto and organized a real pogrom. The manhunt went on throughout yesterday and this morning, and shooting could be heard from all sides.

I happened to be in the street when the hunt began. I managed to rush into a doorway which was jammed with people, and I waited there for two hours. At a quarter past eight, considering that it takes half an hour to walk from Leszno Street to Sienna Street, I decided to go home in order

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to arrive before nine, the curfew hour, after which it is forbidden to be in the streets.

At the corner of Leszno and Zelazna Streets, an enormous mass of people stood drawn up in military ranks in front of the labor office. Most of them were young men *between* eighteen and twenty-five. The Jewish police were forced to see to it that no one ran away. These young men stood with lowered heads as though about to be slaughtered. And actually their prospects are not much better than slaughter. The thousands of men who have been sent to the labor camps thus far have vanished without leaving a trace.

Suddenly the door of a stationery store near which I stood, as if petrified, staring at the group of condemned men, opened, and I felt a hand on my shoulder. It was a Jewish policeman, who quickly dragged me inside.

A moment later, on the very spot where I had been standing, a man fell, struck by a bullet. A lamentation ran through the crowd like an electric current, and reached through the closed door of the stationery store. The fallen man groaned for a while, but was soon taken away in a hand truck. The janitor at once proceeded to scrub the still warm blood from the pavement.

Trembling, I looked at my watch. The curfew hour, the hour of sure death on the ghetto streets, was approaching. Instinctively, I moved toward the exit. But the policeman would not let me go. When I told him how far I lived and that I did not care whether I was shot now or later, he promised to take me home.

I left the store with a few other people who wanted to get home. It was five minutes to nine. The policeman brought me to our doorway, and when I entered our apartment it

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was thirty minutes past curfew time. My parents had almost given me up for dead and flooded me with a hail of questions. But I was in no condition to answer them, and fell at once on my bed. Even now, as I write these lines, I am still shaken by my experience and I see before me the thousands of young Jews standing like sheep before a slaughterhouse. So many sons, brothers, and husbands have been torn away from their loved ones, whom they may never see again, to whom they will not even be allowed to say farewell.

In a few months the mothers, wives, and sisters of these men will receive official postcards informing them that number such-and-such has died. It is inconceivable that we have the strength to live through it. The Germans are surprised that the Jews in the ghetto do not commit mass suicide, as was the case in Austria after the *Anschluss*. We, too, are surprised that we have managed to endure all these torments. This is the miracle of the ghetto.

The epidemic is taking a terrible toll. Recently the mortality reached five hundred a day. The home of every person who falls ill with typhus is disinfected. The apartments or rooms of those who die of it are practically flooded with disinfectants. The health department of the community is doing everything in its power to fight the epidemic, but the shortage of medicines and hospital space remains the chief cause of the huge mortality, and the Nazis are making it increasingly difficult to organize medical help. There is a widespread belief that the Nazis deliberately contaminated the ghetto with typhus bacilli in order to test methods of bacteriological warfare which they intend to apply against England and Russia. It is said that the community has irrefutable proof of this theory from the world-famous bacteriolo-

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gists, Jewish professors from France, Belgium, and Holland, who have been deported here by the Nazis. Thus it is no longer a question of inadequate sanitary measures, or the overcrowding in the ghetto. Tomorrow the Nazis may plant their bacilli in the cleanest section of the ghetto, where the sanitary conditions are exemplary.

Few people today are earning their living by doing normal work. Real money can be made only in dishonest deals, but not many people engage in them; most Jews choose to go hungry rather than become tools in the hands of the Nazis.

But sometimes people are compelled to accept this role. If a person is caught committing a minor violation of the laws, such as wearing the arm band in a manner slightly different from that prescribed, he is arrested and tortured. Such a person is often anxious to commit suicide, but has no easy way of doing it. The Germans find their victims among these tortured people whose spirit and body are broken, and confront them with the choice of life or death. Such people lose all power of resistance; they agree to anything, and thus automatically become tools of the Gestapo. Their chief function is informing. The Nazis want to know who owns jewelry or foreign exchange. An informer can never get out of the Nazis' clutches; he must "accomplish" something to pay for the favor of being allowed to live and receive food. And the Nazis keep threatening him with the renewal of the same tortures.

There are a number of such Gestapo agents in the ghetto, but they are not really dangerous, for they are more or less known and, whenever they can, they even warn the prospective victims of the Gestapo against projected house searches. However, there are a few underworld characters who are

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really dangerous because they take their services for the Gestapo seriously, just as they used to commit crimes in dead earnest.

Even these sad conditions give rise to various bits of gossip and jokes among us, and serve as material for songs and skits that are sung and played in cafés and theaters.

Every day at the Art Café on Leszno Street one can hear songs and satires on the police, the ambulance service, the rickshas, and even the Gestapo, in a veiled fashion. The typhus epidemic itself is the subject of jokes. It is laughter through tears, but it is laughter. This is our only weapon in the ghetto—our people laugh at death and at the Nazi decrees. Humor is the only thing the Nazis cannot understand.

November 22, 1941

Outside, a blizzard is raging and the frost paints designs on the windowpanes. During these terribly cold days, one name is on everyone's lips: Kramsztyk, the man who presides over the distribution of fuel. Alas, the amount of coal and wood the Germans have assigned to the ghetto is so small that it is barely sufficient to heat the official buildings, such as the community administration, the post office, the hospitals, and the schools, so that almost nothing is left for the population at large. On the black market, coal fetches fantastic prices and often cannot be obtained at all.

In the streets, frozen human corpses are an increasingly frequent sight. On Leszno Street in front of the court building, many mothers often sit with children wrapped in rags from which protrude red frostbitten little feet. Sometimes a mother cuddles a child frozen to death, and tries to warm the inanimate little body. Sometimes a child huddles against

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his mother, thinking that she is asleep and trying to awaken her, while, in fact, she is dead. The number of these homeless mothers and children is growing from day to day. After they have given up their last breath they often remain lying on the street for long hours, for no one bothers about them.

The little coaches of Pinkiert's funeral establishment are constantly busy. When a beggar sees a usable piece of clothing on a dead body, he removes it, covers the nude corpse with an old newspaper, and puts a couple of bricks or stones on the paper to prevent it from being blown away by the wind. On Komitetowa and Grzybowska Streets fewer beggars are seen this year than last; they have simply died off.

Hunger is assuming more and more terrible forms. The prices of foodstuffs are going up. A pound of black bread now costs four zlotys, of white bread, six zlotys. Butter is forty zlotys a pound, sugar, from seven to eight zlotys a pound.

It is not easy to walk in the street with a parcel in one's hand. When a hungry person sees someone with a parcel that looks like food, he follows him and, at an opportune moment, snatches it away, opens it quickly, and proceeds to satisfy his hunger. If the parcel does not contain food, he throws it away. No, these are not thieves; they are just people crazed by hunger.

The Jewish police cannot cope with them. And, indeed, who would have the heart to prosecute such unfortunates?

The hygienic conditions are constantly deteriorating. Most of the sewage pipes are frozen, and in many houses the toilets cannot be used. Human excrement is often thrown out into the street together with the garbage. The carts that used regularly to remove the garbage from the courtyards now

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come rarely or not at all. For the time being all this filth is disinfected by the cold. But what will happen when the first spring breeze begins to blow? There is serious apprehension that a cholera epidemic will break out to fill our cup of misfortune to the brim.

December 9, 1941

America's entry into the war has inspired the hundreds of thousands of dejected Jews in the ghetto with a new breath of hope. The Nazi guards at the gates have long faces. Some are considerably less insolent, but on others the effect has been exactly opposite and they are more unbearable than ever. Most people believe that the war will not last long now and that the Allies' victory is certain.

February 27, 1942

Shootings have now become very frequent at the ghetto exits. Usually they are perpetrated by some guard who wants to amuse himself. Every day, morning and afternoon, when I go to school, I am not sure whether I will return alive. I have to go past two of the most dangerous German sentry posts: at the corner of Zelazna and Chlodna Streets near the bridge, and at the corner of Krochmalna and Grzybowska Streets. At the latter place there is usually a guard who has been nicknamed "Frankenstein," because of his notorious cruelty. Apparently this soldier cannot go to sleep unless he has a few victims to his credit; he is a real sadist. When I see him from a distance I shudder. He looks like an ape: small and stocky, with a swarthy grimacing face. This morning, on my way to school, as I was approaching the corner of Krochmalna and Grzybowska Streets, I saw his familiar

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figure, torturing some rickshaw driver whose vehicle had passed an inch closer to the exit than the regulations permitted. The unfortunate man lay on the curb in a puddle of blood. A yellowish liquid dripped from his mouth to the pavement. Soon I realized that he was dead, another victim of the German sadist. The blood was so horribly red the sight of it completely shattered me.

April 17, 1942

I am almost hysterical. A little before six o'clock today, the police captain, Hertz, rushed excitedly into our apartment and said: "Please be prepared for anything; at eight o'clock there is going to be a pogrom." Then he tore out without further explanations. The whole ghetto was seized with panic. People hastily closed their stores. There was a rumor that a special *Vernichtungskommando* (destructive squad), the same which had perpetrated the Lublin pogrom, had arrived in Warsaw to organize a massacre here. It was also said that Ukrainians and Lithuanians would now take over the guarding of the ghetto because the Germans were to go to the Russian front.

April 28, 1942

Last night sixty more persons were executed. They were members of the underground, most of them well-to-do people who financed the secret bulletins. Many printers who were suspected of helping to publish the underground papers were also killed. Once again in the morning there were corpses in the streets. One of the victims was the wealthy baker Blajman, the chief backer of an underground news-

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paper. His brothers, too, were sentenced to die but they managed to escape and are now in hiding.

In our garden everything is green. The young onions are shooting up. We have eaten our first radishes. The tomato plants spread proudly in the sun. The weather is magnificent. The greens and the sun remind us of the beauty of nature that we are forbidden to enjoy. A little garden like ours is therefore very dear to us. The spring this year is extraordinary. A little lilac bush under our window is in full bloom.

May 4, 1942

On the "Aryan" side the population celebrated May 1 and May 3 by a complete boycott of the Nazis. Throughout those days the people tried to avoid taking trolley cars or buying newspapers, for the money goes straight to the Germans. Someone put a wreath of flowers on the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The people deliberately stayed at home, so that a dead silence prevailed in the city. In the ghetto, too, the mood was somehow different. Although many Poles, poisoned by anti-Semitism, deny that their brothers of the Jewish faith are their co-citizens, the Jews, despite the inhuman treatment to which they are subjected, show their patriotism in every possible way. Recently there has been much talk of the partisan groups fighting in the woods of the Lublin region; there are many Jews among them, who fight like all the others for a common goal. And yet the Polish anti-Semites say, "It's a good thing, let the Jews sit behind their walls. At last Poland will be Jewless."

Some Jews are ashamed to admit that Poland is their fatherland, although they love it, because they remember how often their Polish co-citizens have said to them "Go back to

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Palestine, Jew," or how, at the University, the Jewish students were assigned to the "ghetto benches," and were often attacked by Gentile students for no other crime than their Jewish faith. It is a fact that many Gentiles in Warsaw have been infected by Hitler's propaganda. Naturally, there are people who see the error of such ways, but they are afraid to say anything because they would at once be accused of having a Jewish grandfather or grandmother or even of having been bribed by the Jews. Only a few, and these are members of the working-class parties, speak up openly, and these for the most part are fighting in the partisan units. If all the Aryan Poles got together and tried to help the Jews in the ghetto they could do a great deal for us. For instance, they could procure "Aryan" certificates for many Jews, give them shelter in their homes, facilitate their escape over the walls, and so on and so forth. But of course it is easier to throw stones into the ghetto.

It is beginning to be hot, and often, instead of going to school, I take a blanket and a pillow and go to our roof to sunbathe. This practice is widespread in the ghetto, the houses with flat roofs have been transformed into city beaches.

At 20 Chłodna Street the charge for entering the terracelike roof is one złoty fifty groszy. There are folding chairs, cool drinks, and a bird's-eye view of Warsaw. On our own roof I am always alone. It is pleasant to lie there in the sun, where I can see the quarter beyond the wall. The white spires of a church are very near me. They are surrounded by linden branches and the perfume of these lovely trees reaches as far as my roof. Further on there are private houses now used as

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German barracks. The air is pure here, and I think of the wide world, of distant lands, of freedom.

July 5, 1942

Fewer and fewer students come to our school; now they are afraid to walk in the streets. The Nazi guard Frankenstein is raging through the ghetto, one day he kills ten persons, another day five . . . everyone expects to be his next victim. A few days ago I, too, ceased completely attending school.

Today I boldly removed my arm band. After all, officially I am now an American citizen.

The inhabitants of the street looked at me with curiosity: "That's the girl who is going to America." In this street everyone knows everyone else. Every few minutes people approached me and asked me to note the addresses of their American relatives, and to tell them to do everything possible for their unfortunate kin.

July 22, 1942

Today the Jewish police gathered up all the beggars from the streets and emptied the refugee camps. These unfortunates were locked up in freight cars without food or water. The transports are being sent in the direction of Brzesc, but will they ever reach there? It is doubtful that all these starving people will arrive at their destination alive; they will perish in their sealed cars. A hundred persons are crowded into each car. The Polish prison guard who whispered all these details to us had tears in his eyes. He lives near Stawki Street, and he witnessed horrible scenes of people being driven into cars with whips, just as though they were cattle.

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August 1942

Behind the Pawiak gate we are experiencing all the terror that is abroad in the ghetto. For the last few nights we have been unable to sleep. The noise of the shooting, the cries of despair, are driving us crazy. I have to summon all my strength to write these notes. I have lost count of the days, and I do not know what day it is. But what does it matter? We are here as on a little island amidst an ocean of blood. The whole ghetto is drowning in blood. We literally see fresh human blood, we can smell it. Does the outside world know anything about it? Why does no one come to our aid? I cannot go on living, my strength is exhausted. How long are we going to be kept here to witness all this?

A few days ago, a group of neutrals was taken out of the Pawiak. Apparently the Germans were unable to use them for exchange. I saw from my window several trucks filled with people, and I tried to distinguish familiar faces among them. Some time later, the prison guard came panting to us, and told us that the Jewish citizens of neutral European countries had just been taken to the *Umschlagplatz* to be deported. So our turn may come soon, too. I hope it will be very soon. This waiting is worse than death.

Dr. Janusz Korczak's children's home is empty now. A few days ago we all stood at the window and watched the Germans surround the houses. Rows of children, holding each other by their little hands, began to walk out of the doorway. There were tiny tots of two or three years among them, while the oldest ones were perhaps thirteen. Each child carried a little bundle in his hand. All of them wore white aprons. They walked in ranks of two, calm, and even smiling. They had not the slightest foreboding of their fate. At the

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end of the procession marched Dr. Korczak, who saw to it that the children did not walk on the sidewalk. Now and then, with fatherly solicitude, he stroked a child on the head or arm, and straightened out the ranks. He wore high boots, with his trousers stuck in them, an alpaca coat, and a navy-blue cap, the so-called Maciejowka cap. He walked with a firm step, and was accompanied by one of the doctors of the children's home, who wore his white smock. This sad procession vanished at the corner of Dzielna and Smocza Streets. They went in the direction of Gesia Street, to the cemetery. At the cemetery all the children were shot. We were also told by our informants that Dr. Korczak was forced to witness the executions, and that he himself was shot afterward.

Thus died one of the purest and noblest men who ever lived. He was the pride of the ghetto. His children's home gave us courage, and all of us gladly gave part of our own scanty means to support the model home organized by this great idealist. He devoted all his life, all his creative work as an educator and writer, to the poor children of Warsaw. Even at the last moment he refused to be separated from them.

The house is empty now, except for the guards who are still cleaning up the rooms of the murdered children.

Yesterday I saw a detachment of Ukrainians and "Shaulists" (Lithuanians) fully armed, with helmets on their heads, running along Dzielna Street. It had been quiet when, all of a sudden, I heard the clatter of boots. The men ran with fixed bayonets, as though to a front-line attack. Those at the end of the detachment held small hatchets in their hands, such as are used to break down the doors of barricaded apart-

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ments. These beasts often use hatchets against human beings too. The Lithuanians are the worst of all.

During the last two weeks more than 100,000 people have been deported from the ghetto. The number of those murdered is also very large. Everyone who can is trying to get a job in the German factories of Toebens, Schultz, and Hallmann. Fantastic sums are paid for a labor card.

September 20, 1942

The massacres have aroused the underground leaders to greater resistance. The illegal papers are multiplying and some of them reach us even here in the Pawiak. They are full of good reports from the battle fronts. The Allies are victorious in Egypt, and the Russians are pushing the enemy back at Moscow. The sheets explain the meaning of the deportations and tell of the fate of the deported Jews. The population is summoned to resist with weapons in their hands, and warned against defeatist moods, and against the idea that we are completely helpless before the Nazis. "Let us die like men and not like sheep," ends one proclamation in a paper called *To Arms!*

The situation improved somewhat in the last days of August, and some began to take an optimistic view of the future. But this was only the lull before the storm. On September 3 and 4 the Germans began to blockade the workshops organized by the community. Elite Guards, accompanied by Lithuanians and Ukrainians, entered the shops, and took several dozen people out of each, alleging that they needed skilled workers. These workers, numbering more than a thousand, were led away to Stawki Street and deported to the Treblinki camp.

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Now it is generally known that most of the deportees are sent to Treblinki, where they are killed with the help of machines with which the Germans are experimenting for war purposes. But no one knows any details.

October 10, 1942

Today is my birthday. I spent all day on my mattress. Everyone came to congratulate me, but I did not answer. At night my sister managed to snatch three turnips, and we had a real feast to celebrate the occasion.

October 22, 1942

Is this really our last night in the Pawiak? Is it possible that tomorrow we shall leave? Before nightfall we arranged a "farewell dinner" in the men internees' room. We ate turnips, and our representative, Mr. S., made a speech to the twenty-one American citizens. On the table we placed two little American flags that I had kept in my suitcase, as a relic, since the beginning of the war. The mood was one of elation. Noemi W. wore a silk wrapper that looked like an elegant evening gown. She recited and sang songs. I, too, sang several English songs. The attendants watched us and I had the feeling that they envied us.

December 17, 1942

Dita W., one of yesterday's arrivals, told us last night what she had heard about the camp at Treblinki. During her frequent visits to Gestapo headquarters at Aleja Szucha she became acquainted with a German who was an official in this death camp. He did not realize that she was Jewish, and told her with great satisfaction how the deported Jews were being

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murdered there, assuring her that the Germans would finally "mush off" all the Jews.

At the *Umschlagplatz* the cattle cars are loaded with one hundred and fifty people each, after their floors have been covered with a thick layer of lime. The cars have no windows or other openings. The people lie on top of each other without sufficient air to breathe, and without food or water. The cars are often left for two or three days at the Stawki station. The locked-up people must perform their natural functions in the closed cars and, as a result, the lime dissolves, filling the cars with poisonous fumes. The survivors are unloaded at Treblinki station and divided according to their trades. Shoemakers, tailors, etc., are grouped separately in order to make the victims believe that they are going to be employed in workshops. The real purpose is to make them go to their deaths more obediently. The women are separated from the men.

The actual death house of Treblinki is situated in a thick wood. The people are taken in trucks to buildings where they are ordered to undress completely. Each is given a cake of soap and told that he must bathe before going to the labor camp. The naked people, men, women, and children separately, are led into a bathhouse with a slippery tile floor. They tumble down the moment they enter it. Each small compartment is so filled with people that again they must lie on top of one another. After the bathhouse is entirely filled, strongly concentrated hot steam is let in through the windows. After a few minutes the people begin to choke in horrible pain.

After the execution the dead bodies are carried out by Jews—the youngest and most vigorous are especially chosen

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by the Nazis for this purpose. Other Jews are compelled to sort out the shoes and clothes of the victims. After each transport the Jews employed to bury the dead or sort their belongings are relieved by others. They are unable to stand this work for more than a week. Most of them lose their minds and are shot. Even the Ukrainian and German personnel are often relieved, because the older German soldiers begin to complain of their tasks. Only the chief German authorities remain the same.

Escape from Treblinki is impossible, yet two young Jews managed to do the impossible. After long wanderings in the woods they arrived in Warsaw and related other details. According to them the Germans employ various gases as well as electricity in certain execution chambers. Because of the enormous number of the murdered, the Germans have constructed a special machine to dig graves.

People who have traveled in trains past Treblinki say that the stench there is so poisonous that they must stop up their nostrils.

After Dita's accounts none of us could sleep.

December 26, 1942

It looks as though our departure is really imminent. The Nazis are making great efforts to impress us favorably. The day before Christmas all the internees' quarters were scrubbed, even the rooms occupied by the Jews. On Christmas Day we had an exceptionally good meal which consisted of a thick pea soup, a portion of sauerkraut, potatoes, and two pounds of bread.

At nine in the evening Commissioner Nikolaus, accompanied by his aides Jopke and Fleck, and three SS men in uni-

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form, entered our room, saluted us, and assured us that we would surely leave in the very near future.

This morning we received a visit from the hangman, Bureckl. He wore his gala uniform and, probably on account of the holiday, did not carry his riding crop. He had had a good dose of liquor and was in an exuberant mood. He approached old Rabbi R., took him by the hand and, shaking with laughter, wished him a merry Christmas. "We Germans can be kind, too!" he snickered as he staggered out of our room.

January 1, 1943

New Year's Eve for me was full of nightmares. I fell asleep and woke up several times, for I was tormented by horrible dreams. I relived all the scenes I had witnessed during these years of war. Again and again the little children of Janusz Korczak's home passed before my eyes. I knew that they were dead and I wondered why they kept smiling and smiling. Each time I fell asleep these children came before me. Then I was awakened by shouts and laughter coming from the direction of the prison yard. The Nazi officials were gaily welcoming the New Year. From time to time I heard the sound of shots, followed again by laughter and the noise of broken glass. Then came roaring drunken voices.

The first day of 1943 is cloudy and snowy. As I write these lines I cannot stop thinking of Dita W.'s stories of Treblinki. I see before me the tiled bathhouses filled with naked people choking in the hot steam. How many of my relatives and friends have perished there? How many young, still unlived lives? I curse the coming of the New Year.

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February 27, 1944

At last a date has been set! The exchange will take place in Lisbon on March 5. Wounded American soldiers and civilian internees are scheduled for exchange. But it is not clear yet what the ratio of the exchange will be: five Germans for one American, or vice versa, five Americans for one German. Various rumors are circulating on the subject. The camp administration organizes a new registration every hour; new people are put on the lists, old ones are crossed off. We are all at a terrible pitch of tension and nervousness. Our family was on the first two lists, but now we have been taken off them. My mother is rushing around from one office to another. Only about thirty persons are supposed to go with the first batch, while there are one hundred and fifty candidates for exchange in Vittel. All these shifts and rumors have completely shattered our nerves.

March 3, 1944

A few minutes ago we exchanged all our money for dollars. This has finally reassured us; we really believe we are going to America now. All the men were made to sign a pledge that they would not fight against Germany in any army. When they left the cars to sign this pledge we saw a train with German internees arrive on another track. They have come from America to be exchanged for us. All of us actually pitied these Germans.

March 4, 1944

Our train is now on Spanish territory. At the stations some people greet us with the "V" sign. The poverty of Spain strikes one at once. Ragged children stretch out their hands,

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begging for a coin. There are many soldiers, especially smartly dressed officers. The civilian population is dressed in rags, and the people have hollow cheeks.

Many of the Germans who escorted us have remained on the French side of the border, and those who still accompany us now are dressed in mufti. With their uniforms they have shed their insolence.

March 3, 1944

We have just crossed the Portuguese border. The uniformed Spanish police have been replaced by Portuguese secret police. We are still in the same train. Here, too, people greet us with "V" signs.

Our train is approaching Lisbon. I can see the sails of various ships. Someone in our car has just shouted the word: "Gripsholm!" This unfamiliar Swedish word means freedom to us.

I was awakened by the sound of the ship's engine. The "Gripsholm" was on the open sea. I went out on deck and breathed in the endless blueness. The blood-drenched earth of Europe was far behind me. The feeling of freedom almost took my breath away.

In the last four years I have not known this feeling. Four years of the black swastika, of barbed wire, ghetto walls, executions, and, above all, terror—terror by day and terror by night. After four years of that nightmare I found it hard to enjoy my freedom at first. I constantly imagined that it was only a dream, that at any moment I would awaken in the Pawiak and once again see the aged men with gray beards, the blooming young girls and proud young men.

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driven like cattle to the *Umschlagplatz* on Stawki Street to their deaths.

I even fancied sometimes that I heard the cries of the tortured, and the salty smell of the sea suddenly changed into the nauseating, sweetish odor of human blood, which had often entered our windows in the Pawiak.

I had thought that on the ship I would forget the nightmare of the ghetto. But, strangely enough, in the infinity of ocean I constantly saw the bloody streets of Warsaw.

On deck I made friends with American soldiers and fliers who had been shot down on missions over Germany, and who had been exchanged together with us. Some of them had empty hanging sleeves. Others walked on crutches. Two young officers had horribly disfigured faces; others had had their faces burned. One of them had lost both legs, but a smile never left his lips.

I felt close to these Americans, and when I told them about what the Nazis had done in the ghetto they understood me.

Aboard ship I saw the first American film in four years. It was *Yankee Doodle Dandy*. The soldiers and officers had tears in their eyes when they saw it.

By nightfall of March 14 the outline of the American coast began to emerge from the mist. The passengers went out on deck and lined the railings. I was reminded of the Biblical story of the flood, and of Noah's ark, when it finally reached dry land.

All that day I felt completely broken, as though I had to bear the burden of many, many years. I did not take part in the entertainment that night. I lay in a corner of the deck, listening to the sound of the waves that were growing stormier and stormier.

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On March 15 our ship approached New York. People who had gone through years of common misfortune began to say farewell to each other. A mood of fraternal affection prevailed among us. On everyone's face there was an expression of restless expectation.

I saw the skyscrapers of New York, but my thoughts were in Warsaw . . .

I shall do everything I can to save those who can still be saved, and to avenge those who were so bitterly humiliated in their last moments. And those who were ground into ash, I shall always see them alive. I will tell, I will tell everything, about our sufferings and our struggles and the slaughter of our dearest, and I will demand punishment for the German murderers and their Gretchens in Berlin, Munich, and Nuremberg who enjoyed the fruits of murder, and are still wearing the clothes and shoes of our martyrized people.

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Appendix E:

Profile on Jan Karski

JAN KARSKI

To be in the presence of Jan Karski, Polish spy for the underground, a major figure in Claude Lanzmann's Shoah, *and professor of Eastern European political science at Georgetown University, is a daunting experience. We approach the interview somewhat in awe of this handsome man, with his regal bearing and remarkable eloquence. Our insecurity probably stems from the fact that he had asked for a list of questions before he would make the appointment. He ushers us solemnly into his house with an accent akin to Bela Lugosi's and sits expectantly for our questions. Our fears are unfounded. Karski is brilliant and severe, but we quickly discover that he is also playful, boyish, and charming. His students are fortunate to have a professor who is not only knowledgeable but profoundly concerned about people. Since our meeting, we have corresponded, and he remains a helpful, caring friend.*

I was born in 1914, in Lodz, Poland, the youngest of eight children. The oldest was eighteen years older, and all of the other children were out of the house by the time I was an adolescent. My parents were middle-class. My father died when I was a child so he did not register much in my heart or in my mind. My mother—like all mothers, I loved her, I obeyed her. She was very sensitive, extremely religious. At the age of twelve, I joined a semireligious, semisecret organization. My mentor was a Jesuit Father, so I fell under the influence of the Jesuits sixty years ago and until today nobody liberated me from the Jesuits.

I was always a good student. In gymnasium, I became friends with a group of Jewish students. Jews were always strong in science and I was strong in history, poetry, literature. So for four years we established the closest relationship. I helped them and they helped me. I remember vividly their names and faces, what each one of them taught me, and what was the particular ambition of each of them. What happened to them all I do not know. Only God knows.

I finished gymnasium in 1931. My mother didn't want me to go to military service, so I went to university. I was the best student in the university. Most of my thinking life I wanted to be a diplomat, an ambassador of Poland. My hero was the foreign minister of Napoleon, Talleyrand. I called him "The Divine Prince of Benevento." For my thesis, I tried to reconstruct every day of his life, which, of course, was impossible.

In 1935, I earned my master's degree in law and diplomatic sciences. Then I went into the military for one year. In 1936, I began an unofficial attachment to the diplomatic service, and went for eight months to Geneva under the League of Nations. Then I went for eleven months to England to learn English, and then in February 1938 I went back to Warsaw to enter training for the Foreign Office, which I completed eleven months later, with the highest grades. In January 1939, I was made the secretary of the Department of Immigration and became the private secretary of the director of personnel in the Foreign Ministry. This was an important position.

On August 23, 1939, the Nazis and Soviets agreed to a nonaggression pact. At the same time Poland semisecretly mobilized. On September 1, the bombs fell. For

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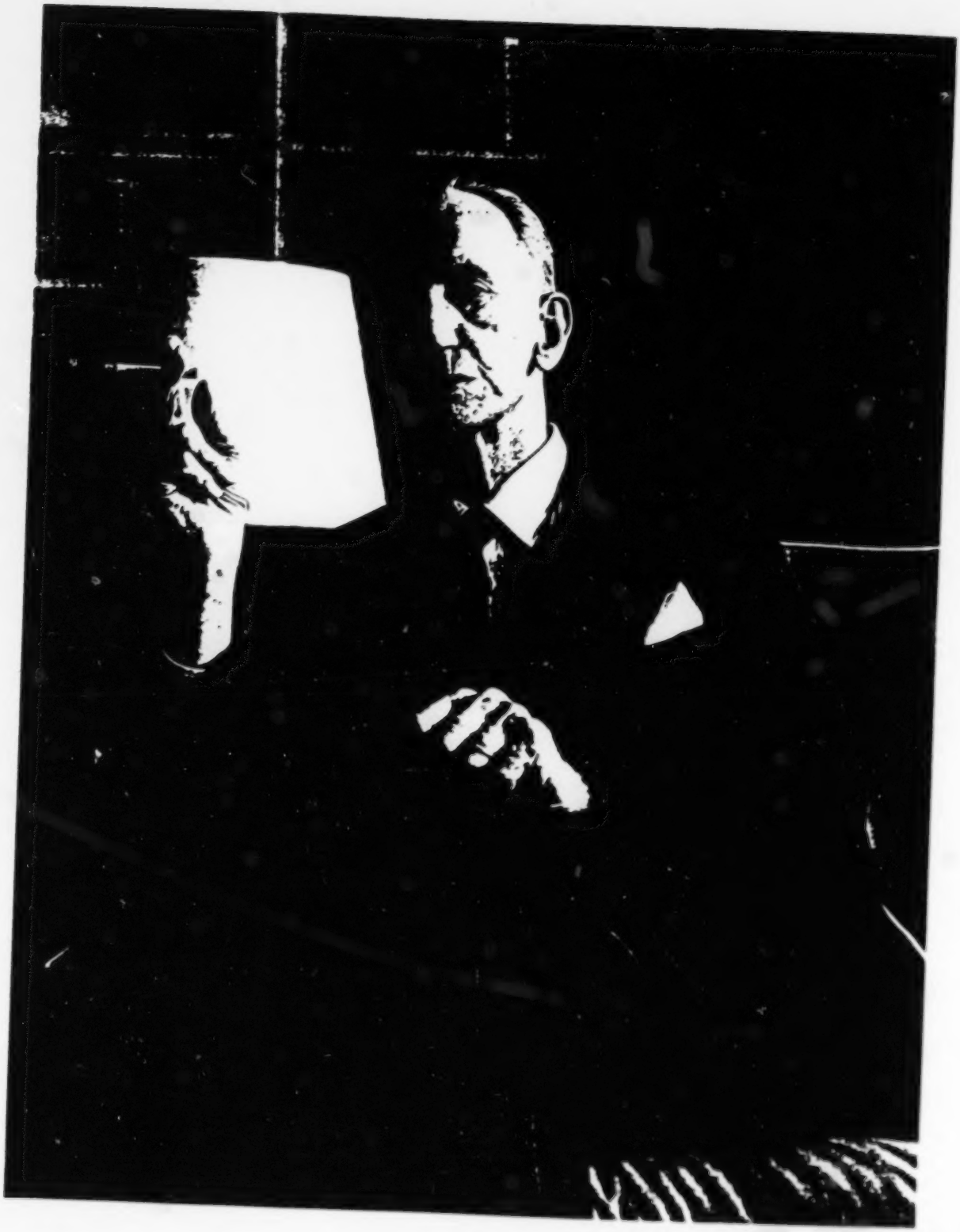

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me the war lasted twenty minutes. I was in the army when the Nazis invaded. I never saw a German, I never fired shots. I saw only chaos and confusion. I was taken as a prisoner of war to the Soviet Union, and I escaped by using my brain and my physical agility.

When I returned and looked for my friends, I found that the underground had already been formed. They knew about my good memory, and that I was familiar with many other parts of Europe, so in December 1939 I did my first job as a courier from Warsaw to France, where the Polish government-in-exile was located. I crossed all of Slovakia and reached Hungary on skis. Once in Budapest, I was provided with false documents and could take the train to France. I was there for four months, and returned by the same route, this time on foot. On my next trip, however, I was arrested in Slovakia. I was tortured and my ribs were broken. I had so much information and I couldn't stand the torture, so I tried to cut my wrists. But I found out it's a very hard thing to do.

The Gestapo sent me back to Poland, where I established contact with the underground, who rescued me. The person who organized my escape was one of my close friends, a prominent rising star of socialism, Józef Cyrankiewicz, the man who was to be the Communist prime minister of Poland for eighteen years. I owe my life to him. In 1974, when I spent six months in Poland under a Fulbright Scholarship to work on my book, I visited with him.

Until that time I had never been hit by anyone, and I had never hit anyone. And then when I saw the ghetto . . . I cannot stand violence. I cannot watch TV when a man and woman argue. I cannot stand loud voices. I have enough of war. War degrades people. War generates hatred. You have to hate. People will do terrible things: derail a train, never mind that innocent people will be killed; throw a grenade, never mind that children will be killed. This I never realized: that war generates such hatred.

As a child I was taught an individual has human dignity, responsibility to society and to our Lord. Everyone has a soul, a human conscience. We have an infinite capacity to choose between evil and good, and God gave us free will. What I did not realize is that only individuals have souls; governments, nations, societies, have no souls. There is no such thing as a collective soul.

What happened to me is this. Two Jewish men from the underground came to me to ask me to help the Jews. They asked me to take the information about the systematic killing of the Jews to the leaders of the Allied governments. "Tell Churchill and Roosevelt that we know the Allies will win the war, but by then it will be too late for the Jews. Tell them we need two things: tell them we can buy Jewish lives, that the Germans can be bribed, so we need money to get Jews out of the country. And we think that the general population in Germany does not know what is happening to the Jews. We want the Allies to drop millions of leaflets all over Germany, informing the population and warning them that if they do not pressure their government to stop, you will bomb their cities." These were the requests they asked me to make on their behalf. But first, they asked me to go into the Warsaw Ghetto and the Belzec death camp, to see for myself. I thought perhaps they were exaggerating, so I agreed. The ghetto was macabre. It was not a world. It was not a part of humanity. I did not belong there. I vomited blood that night. I saw horrible, horrible things I will never forget. So I agreed to do what they asked of me.

In February 1943, I reported to Anthony Eden in London, who said that Great

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Britain had already done enough by accepting 100,000 refugees. In July I arrived in the United States. Almost every individual was sympathetic to my reports concerning the Jews. But when I reported to the leaders of governments they discarded their conscience, their personal feeling. They provided a rationale which seemed valid. What was the situation? The Jews were totally helpless. The war strategy was the military defeat of Germany and the defeat of Germany's war potential for all eternity. Nothing could interfere with the military crushing of the Third Reich. The Jews had no country, no government. They were fighting but they had no identity. One of my partners in the underground was Jewish. I found out only after the war. It was too dangerous to reveal their identity, even to fellow resistance workers. They had no identity. Helping Jews was no advantage to the Allied war strategy. The highest officials, including Lord Selborne in London, argued that if hard currency were exchanged for Jews, the Allies would be criticized after the war for subsidizing Hitler with gold and silver. They said, "Mr. Karski, this is impossible, we will not do it." Roosevelt gave the underground $12 million, but this was for the army, for fighting, "not charity to save your children," he said. When I hear people say "the Jews were passive," and that "they didn't fight"—this is nonsense. In many concentration camps there were uprisings, escapes, and in the forests they fought with Partisan groups. But they had no identity. The Jews were helpless. If a Jew escaped from the ghetto, where could he go? Abandoned absolutely by all societies, governments, church hierarchies, societal organizations. Only individuals might help and were helping. The help had to come from the powerful Allied leaders, and this help did not come.

Meeting Roosevelt was a great occasion. I was overwhelmed with his majesty. He was a great personality. He was not specific on anything, but you realize, I couldn't ask anything. I didn't come to negotiate, only to report and answer questions. So I said, "I will return to Poland, Mr. President. What shall I tell my people?" He said, "You will tell them we shall win the war and the enemy will be punished for their crimes. Justice will prevail. Tell your nation that they have a friend in this house. This is what you will tell them."

Thirty-five or forty years after the war, I read an interview with John Pehle, who said that my mission had shaken the President and that he had ordered the creation of the American Refugee Board, which was formed only four months after I saw him. Pehle himself was appointed the director of the board but said, "It was too little, too late." Is this true? Pehle says so, but I am skeptical. I read it and it gave me satisfaction, but for myself, I am skeptical.

I know Roosevelt's and Eden's arguments had some logic. Goebbels had propagandized that the Jews had provoked the war, and they made others believe that. And would the French like it, would they say, "Why for the Jews?" And would Poland itself even like it?

At the end of August 1943 I tried to return to Poland, but it was decided it was too dangerous. The Germans believed I was working for "American Bolshevik Jews." So I stayed in the United States, but no longer in secret. Now I was attached to the Polish Embassy; I earned $500 per month, and I wrote articles to every magazine of any importance—*Life*, *The New York Times*, *The Jewish Forward*, *La France Libre* —about what was happening to the Jews. I traveled all over the United States, delivering over two hundred lectures, and by the end of 1944 my book appeared, *Story of a Secret State*. It was a Book-of-the-Month Club selection, and two

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Jan Karski, 1944.

key chapters were about the Warsaw Ghetto and the Belzec death camp. Nothing seemed to matter. Then the end of the war came and I was a political exile. During those years I was lecturing, I had absolute faith that I was representing Poland and would one day return there. Absolute faith. As the Jews had been abandoned during the war, so Poland and the other Eastern European countries had been abandoned by the Allies.

I stayed in the United States on an entry visa, and five years later I became a citizen. I met my wife here. I had known her by reputation as a great modern dancer in England, but I didn't know her personally. Soon I decided to enter academia. The Jesuits gave me a scholarship to Georgetown University. I earned my Ph.D. in government in two and a half years, and I've been at Georgetown ever since.

After the war I wanted to run away from all my memories. I felt contempt for the hypocrisy of the leaders, great leaders, military men, ministers who went to Germany to see for themselves. They saw, and all of them were shocked. All of them, without exception. They didn't know such things were possible. They were taken by surprise. Hypocrisy. They knew. And if some didn't know, it was because they didn't want to know. Human beings have this capacity to disregard. For over thirty years I never mentioned to anyone that I was in the war. I wanted to bury myself at the university, and I did. And then in 1977, I received a letter from Claude Lanzmann, who made the film *Shoah*. He asked if he could interview me. I didn't answer his letter. I thought nothing would come of it. Then Lanzmann called me and said, "Mr. Karski, look in the mirror. You are an old man. You don't know when you are going to die. It is your duty to appear in my film." I told him, "I saw terrible things in Poland concerning the Jews which I don't want to remember." He replied, "That is why we should not let humanity forget."

So circumstances took me back and broke my silence. I am not happy about it; now I have bad dreams again. But my conscience is telling me that I should speak. But I do not like Lanzmann; I only admire him. He made a great film. He cared only about his work. He cared only about how the Holocaust could happen, what he called "the mechanism of the Holocaust." He was interested only in three kinds of people: the perpetrators, the Jews who were in the camps, and those who actually saw it. He didn't even care about the war. Only about how it could happen. He asked Poles only in those towns near the camps because they saw it with their eyes. So all the Poles looked dumb because they were peasants, little people from little towns. The educated people didn't live near Treblinka and Auschwitz. Intelligent, educated Poles lived in Warsaw, Cracow, or London. And he insists that the word "shoah" is the only correct one. "Holocaust," he said, "involves also some sense of self-sacrifice, volunteerism of some kind. It is a word for Hollywood which Elie Wiesel made famous. 'Shoah' implies it was planned by humans, executed to the end against the laws of nature and God."

I teach courses today in the government and politics of Eastern Europe. One of them begins with the Versailles Peace Treaty and goes to the present time. My impression is that many of the students, even Jewish students, listen to my lecture about the war and are shocked. They are impressed, but they consider what I tell them as a sort of frightening story, terrible, but still a sort of ancient myth, rather unreal. The point is that it is difficult to visualize what actually happened to the Jews during the war. Their minds cannot absorb that it was real. I have had this feeling often.

I was asked to teach a course on the Holocaust, but I refused. I have no stomach

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for it. And besides, it's not my specialty. But what teachers of the Holocaust must remember, what must be emphasized, and many Jews do not do it enough, particularly those who teach the Holocaust, particularly to the children—we must be very careful. If the teacher is not qualified, he or she will run a risk of corrupting the young minds. First, that such things were possible, such horrors happened. Corrupting the minds of the young people will cause them to lose faith in humanity, particularly the Jewish children. "Everybody hated us . . . everybody was against us, so I must be only for myself. So I must distrust everybody. Because I am a Jewish girl or a Jewish boy." This is unhealthy. We don't want them to lose faith in humanity.

We should also emphasize that after the war over one-half million Jews survived in Europe. Now, some of them don't owe anything to anybody. They survived in the camps; the Nazis had no time to finish them off. There were others, they don't owe anything to anybody. They survived in the mountains, in the forests, fighting, as Partisans. But most of them were helped, by individuals, by priests, nuns, peasants, some workers, some intelligentsia, whatever they were. In France, in Belgium, in Holland, in Poland, in Romania, in Bulgaria, in Serbia, in Greece. Now, to help a Jew during the war was very dangerous. In France or Belgium you might go to jail if they caught you, in some cases you would be punished or receive a penalty, pay some money. But in Eastern Europe, particularly Poland, instantaneous death! Execution! Sometimes if the family was involved, the entire family shot! There were a few cases, not many, but a few cases where the Gestapo found out that the peasants in the village knew that there was some Jewish family in hiding, they burned the village, the entire village! And still there were people who were helping the Jews!

So children must understand this: do not lose faith in humanity. This is the message to Jewish children. For non-Jews they should understand, "Yesterday Jews, tomorrow maybe Catholics, yellows, or blacks." And secondly, they should know what obedience to our second commandment, "Love your neighbor as yourself," can do. It can save people in such circumstances as this. Lanzmann himself was hidden by a French peasant family for several years.

I worked on my last book for fifteen years. Now I want to retire, and every year I go to the provost and every year he says, "God made you a teacher and a teacher you will stay." So I remain a teacher. At the age of seventy-four. Everyone wants some social recognition, so if competent people tell me, "You are a good teacher, we want you here," then it's easier. Six times in secret ballot the seniors have voted me the single teacher who made the most impact on their lives. And so I teach. And I have another pressure, my wife. She told my dean, "Listen, if I have my husband at home every day, be prepared after a few months I will go mad. Keep him at school!"

So I have become known because of my work during the war. Here is my pride and joy, my medal from Yad Vashem. I was invited to Israel and spent three weeks there. I gave lectures, and I learned that the Israeli people quarrel more than even the Poles. Everybody criticizes everybody. Only when there is an emergency do they come together. And then, after *Shoah*, a British company came to interview me and made a forty-six-minute videotape called *Messenger from Poland* about my wartime work. All of this was not planned. Always people pushed me around. This is what my life consists of.

My life during the war was running everywhere, from this leader to that. My life since the war is hard work. I work all the time. I have enough of it. I am tired. I am tired.

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Appendix F:

Profile on Gustav Mikulai

GUSTAV MIKULAI

Gustav Mikulai surprises us the first time we arrive at his apartment in Bonn. He takes one look at our translator and announces he will not speak to her. "You're German," he tells her. "I'm a Judeophile, and you cannot understand anything, and, because you're not Jewish, you must be an anti-Semite." We apologize to the translator, who assures us that because she is not an anti-Semite, his accusations were not wounding. Mikulai tells us to return that evening, when he will provide his own translator.

We arrive to meet Miriam, a beautiful sixteen-year-old girl, one of his violin students. Of course, she is Jewish. He is a different man, relaxed, charming, and fully cooperative. After the interview he pours us sherry, all the while beaming at his protégée.

My whole life I have had three passions: music, women, and Jews. The Jews were capable and everyone was envious; I understood that from the beginning. I couldn't be anti-Semitic, first because I thought it would be immoral, and second because I thought well enough of myself that I didn't need to be envious of them.

I was born in 1905 in Budapest. My father was a stage technician at the theater. He wasn't intellectual but he was clever and politically left, a Social Democrat. My parents were Catholics, but not devout. We had many Jewish neighbors who were friends of ours and we really didn't see any differences.

By the time I was ten years old, I knew I would be a violinist. It was my father's idea because he saw that the musicians were better paid than others in the theater. My mother taught me piano for about eight years. Just after World War I, I started thinking about politics. There was a sort of offensive against the right wing at that time, and I could see poverty and injustice all around me. I was going through a period of general insecurity and curiosity. Friends influenced me to become a Social Democrat. So I learned about Marxism.

At sixteen I entered a private music school where one-third of my class was Jewish. There were quite a few Jewish professors at this school because they weren't allowed to teach at the university. The Jews appeared more intelligent and talented than the rest of the students, and everyone was envious.

By the time I was twenty-five, I had been in love with about twenty-five Jewish girls. In 1930 I got my music diploma and married a Jewish woman, Clara Hirschman. She was a pianist, and very poor. I founded an orchestra of fourteen women musicians, and all but three were Jewish. An all-female orchestra was a great novelty at that time.

Hungary wasn't occupied until March 1944, but the minute the Nazis invaded, I hid my in-laws and my wife. I had money and I knew the city very well, so it wasn't difficult. I had false identity cards made for them and for myself because I had changed my name to avoid being arrested. I was in danger not because I was particularly important but because there were so many posters all over town with my name and picture on them, advertising the orchestra, and I was known to be a Social Democrat. I think I lived in twenty-four hideouts altogether.

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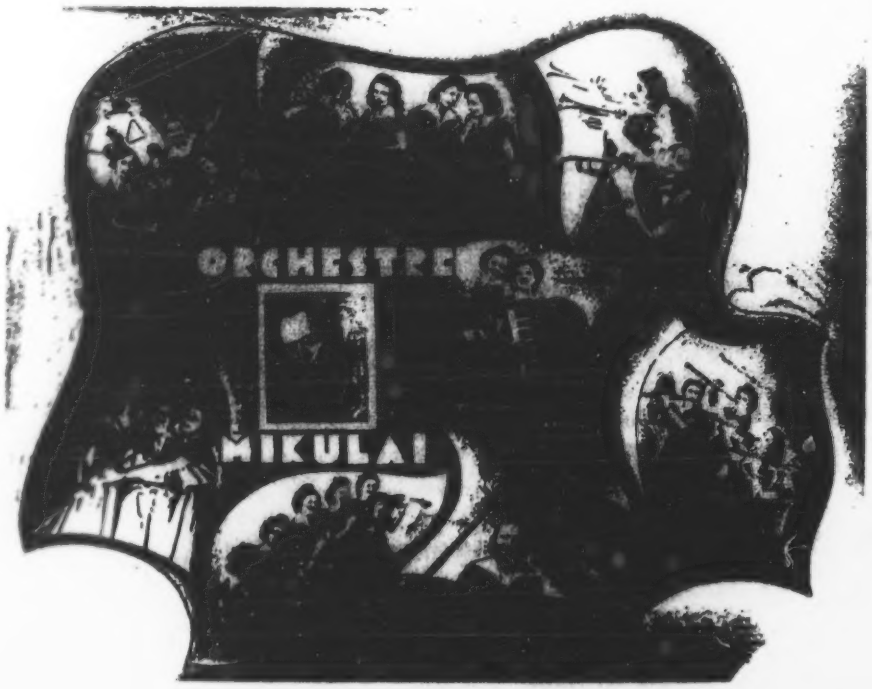

Poster advertisement for Gustav Mikulai's all-women orchestra, 1938–40.

All my friends knew that if they needed help for a Jew, I was the one to do it. The Jews called me the "Scarlet Pimpernel of Budapest." For the next eight months, my friend Donny and I were busy hiding all the Jews we could. The Germans put the Jews into one area in Budapest, and Donny and I walked up and down the streets of the ghetto, knocking on doors and handing out false papers to the Jews and giving them another place to live. I found during this time of the Holocaust that I could kill anyone who was suspicious to me. It was a terrible time for humanity.

Even though I was in many life-threatening situations, I was never afraid. I was frankly sort of drunk with my rebellion against the horrible injustice to the Jews. Donny and I would go into a camp where the Jews were being held just before deportation, and we would take some out and put them in hiding places. I'd like to tell you one of these stories.

There was one family related to my wife who were in a camp of about 9,000 Jews just outside Budapest. It was a very hot day in July 1944, and I went there to find these people. There were guards on horseback all over the place. There was no water in the camp, so they released about fifty people at a time to go to the well. I saw a young man from this family, so I threw down a note warning him that they would be sent to Auschwitz the next day and that I would be there to try to get them out. I had false documents ready for them.

The next day I went there, dressed in the same clothes as the prisoners. There were 9,000 prisoners, 200 guards on horses, and one commander. I found the old couple easily, because he was pushing a wheelbarrow, but they were too weak to go with me. But I found their daughter and son-in-law and their one-year-old child, and they were willing to try to escape. I just began walking with them. A forest bordered the train station, and as soon as we weren't being watched I took them out.

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We met my brother at a pub as we had planned, and he took them to his house. The next day I went to my mother's house and she told me that during the night the Gestapo had come and taken the family as well as my brother. The taxi driver who had taken my brother and the others just happened to be from the same village as the family, and he denounced them. The Hungarian Fascist party, the Arrow Cross, was very strong in Hungary and had many supporters.

It happened that my father knew about Raoul Wallenberg, and he sent a note to him to ask for help for this family and my brother. I never met Wallenberg, but he was able to get them all released. Today they live in Zurich, and the little girl is now married to a professor of medicine, and they have two daughters and live in Canada. The parents also had another child after the war, and they also have two children. So, even though 600,000 Jews were killed in Hungary, I helped preserve a small part of them. I think in all I was able to save at least fifty people, and maybe eighty or a hundred. I'm happy about the times I was able to rescue children who, now married and with children of their own, would not have had such a life without my help. It isn't just a matter of 6 million who were murdered. It's the children and grandchildren they would have had. All of these lives have been prevented.

After the war I was able to get out of Hungary because I was a good Communist. I formed another all-women's orchestra, and since the best place for an orchestra leader was Germany, I came here. At first I thought it was a mistake because of their history, but I've met some great people here.

I am abnormal in three respects: I'm never afraid, I don't really know what age means, and I don't care if a woman is sixteen or sixty—I like them all.

Appendix G:

Profile on Alex and Mela Rosan

Alex and Mela Roslan

Living in Warsaw, Alex and Mela Roslan were the parents of two young children when the ghetto was created. We interviewed them on the patio outside their comfortable garden apartment in Clearwater, Florida. The sunshine and emerald lawn do not soften Alex's emotional, dramatic story of how he and Mela took the three wealthy Gutgelt brothers, ranging in age from three to eight, into their small Warsaw apartment and kept them hidden for four years. The story is not entirely a happy one; the Roslans' son dies in the Warsaw uprising and the middle Gutgelt boy dies of scarlet fever. Although Mela was full partner with Alex in the rescue, she says little, listening to his every detail, speaking only when he cannot remember something. After two hours he makes us sandwiches, shows us photographs, and continues to share with us what seems to be the most important time of his life.

Today sometimes I don't sleep. I think about how it was and why it happened like that. My story was not possible. My friends said it wasn't possible. "There's not enough food for your own children and certainly not enough for three boys, too." But I thought the war would be finished in two or three months. I wasn't a religious fanatic but I believed all the time that somebody watched over me.

Mela and I were both born in a small village twelve kilometers from Bialystok, in Poland. Mela was born in 1907, and I was born two years later, in a house just two blocks from hers. There were maybe 100 people in the village, but Bialystok had about 200,000 people. Mela's father was a shoemaker in Bialystok, and he made a study of Jewish people. He spoke Yiddish like he was a Jew.

My grandmother was very religious, but not my grandfather. My father went to the army when I was six years old and never came back, but he had taught me to fight for what I thought was right, and that those who follow like sheep are led to the slaughter. My mother was thirty-six years old then, and she married a man twenty-four years old. He married her because she had a good farm, but he was not a farmer. I was twelve years old and they thought I was a troublemaker because I was always angry that he was letting our farm run down. So they sent me away to Bialystok to become a shoemaker, but I left there and didn't come home. I went to another village and got a job, and three years later I went back home. But I still argued with my mother that her husband isn't a good farmer, so I sold my part of the farm and left for good. I cried when I had to leave home. [Alex cries here, remembering the pain of leaving his mother.]

Mela and I were married in 1928, and we moved to Bialystok. Our son, Yurek, was born in 1931, and our daughter, Mary, in 1934. I was working as a textile merchant and I made a lot of money. Most of my customers were Jews, but overnight, when they put the Jews in the ghetto, I lost everything. I wanted to know what had happened to my friends and customers because I heard terrible stories. I got a Jewish friend to bring me into the ghetto through a tunnel. It was dangerous for a non-Jew to be inside the ghetto so I wore a Jewish star. I saw so many children,

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hungry and starving. They were so skinny. The parents had been taken to "farms," but we knew what that meant. The children came around and begged for a penny to buy some bread. My Jewish friend stopped me. He said it wouldn't make any difference, that they would die anyway. I came home and told Mela we had to do something. We decided to go to Warsaw.

You know, I think I cry a lot. I cried when I had to leave my mother's house; I cried when I went into the ghetto and the little children clamored after me and kissed my coat and cried for help. I'm very sensitive to the poor. My grandmother was like that.

We got a nice one-room apartment in Warsaw, and one day I met my friend Stanley, from the next village from mine. Stanley told me he had been working for the Gutgelt family before the war; he was the chauffeur for the grandfather. He said they were wonderful people, and very rich, but now they are in the ghetto. He told me that the grandfather had taken the three sons and the son-in-law, and almost all the money, and they had left Warsaw, hoping to get to Palestine. They believed the Germans were only interested in killing men, and thought they would leave the women and children alone. So in the ghetto were the grandmother, two aunts named Janke and Devora, and three children, Jacob, Sholom, and David. The boys' mother had died when David was born. I told Stanley he should help them, that he should take the children, but he says it's too hard. I say maybe they can come to my house. I have two children, no one will notice one more. Stanley made a connection with Janke and told her that he was considering taking the children, but before anything could happen, Stanley had to go one day to the next town to buy some tobacco to sell. He asked me to go with him, but something told me not to go. The next day I found out that Stanley and all the people he was with were killed.

Aunt Janke with Jacob, David, and Sholom Gutgelt, in the ghetto, 1942.

A couple of days later a man dressed like a German civilian knocked on my door. He was looking for Stanley, and I told him what had happened. He cried out, "Oh, now everything is finished." I asked him what he meant, and he said, "Do you know Janke?" This man was Dr. Kowalski, the brother-in-law of Janke's husband. His real name was Avraham Galer, but Kowalski was the name on his fake I.D. I told him I knew Stanley was making plans, and he asks me if I will take one boy. I tell him I will try.

I met with Janke at my house. She explained that she doesn't have any money, and that she would like to give me some of the family's real-estate holdings. I tell her, "This is still war. If after the war you can pay me, maybe, okay." She asks me, "How do I know I can trust you? I don't know you." I say, "Trust me." She cries and kisses me. I want to take her and the rest of the family, but they want to stay in the ghetto until after Passover. So two days later I meet her and take Jacob.

Jacob told Janke goodbye and right away I told him, "Jacob, from now on you're not Jacob anymore. You look just like my brother's son. Your name is now Genek. I will make you two promises right now. No matter how bad things get, we will live through it. And you will remain Jewish." I don't know how I could promise him that, but I did.

Jacob was about nine or ten years old, and so smart and clever. I told him he had to stay in his room and not look out the window. We had to be careful that the neighbors shouldn't see him. Our children liked him so much. We always divided everything fairly between all four children. I tried to make sure that the children didn't understand they were strange because Janke had told me, "Try to make sure

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Jacob doesn't know he's different. Try to make sure that he doesn't know what danger is. If there is danger, don't talk about it."

We built a false floor in the kitchen cupboard; Jacob was skinny so he could fit in. But about two weeks later the Gestapo came because a neighbor thought she had seen Jacob. They looked everywhere, but they didn't find him. Then one day that same SS man came again, but that time my brother-in-law was visiting and he knew this man. Jacob was hiding under the sink, and we started giving the Nazi whiskey. They drank and they ate so much, and my brother-in-law convinced him his sister would never hide a Jew, so we escaped that time. But I knew I had to go looking for another apartment.

I found a nice big apartment in a quiet neighborhood. I put Jacob inside the couch, and that's how we moved across town, right under the noses of the Germans. A couple of days later Dr. Kowalski came to see me and he says, "Mr. Roslan, I want to bring you another boy. He's in a place now where he has to stay in the attic laying down all the time. He's so skinny and sickly."

So I asked my wife what she thinks. We talked. But I said, "Mela, if they catch us for one, it's the same if we have two." So Sholom came, and we changed his name to Orish. He was so hungry, but so sweet. I think he was here only two months when my Mary and Yurek, and Jacob got scarlet fever. The doctor said it is very bad. Yurek was in the hospital and he gave Mela half his medicine every night for Jacob. Then Sholom got sick, and he was too weak. Mary, Yurek, and Jacob got well, but Sholom was too sick. Dr. Kowalski came every day, but then he didn't come for a few days. One night in the middle of the night I went to Sholom and he says he feels so bad. He says, "I would feel better if you would hold me." I picked him up, and he died in my arms. We buried him in the basement, sitting up, because someone told me that was the way to bury a Jew.

Jacob in 1940.

Then Jacob got sick again and he had to have an operation. My brother-in-law knew a doctor who had a clinic and would do the surgery, but I had to find 10,000 zlotys. This wasn't so much money but if you had none it was too much money. I decided to go out and sell our nice big apartment and get a smaller one, and I did it. Somebody watched over me. I got 60,000 zlotys, but when I told Mela I sold the apartment she cried and cried. She said, "Orish died, Genek will die, and now we don't even have an apartment." I said, "Mela, don't worry. I bought a one-room apartment and I'll make more money so we can get a bigger one soon. Don't worry."

Jacob in 1940.

The next day I bandaged Jacob's head and took him to the hospital on a horse. His operation was a success, and everyone cried. Then David came to us. He was about four or five, and so cute, so cute. He had been at my brother-in-law's but it didn't work out, so we took him.

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David and Jacob with Alex Roslan, 1945.

Jacob and David in the suits Alex and Mela had made for them, with their father, just after the boys' arrival in Israel, 1947.

I had to keep doing everything I could think of to make money. I did a lot of tricks, but Mela, she had her tricks, too. When we moved she knew the Gestapo was looking for me so she took all my clothes to a friend's house so she could say I was gone for good. I was arrested near the end of the war, and Mela came every day to a different gate with money for me to use to buy my way out. We never would have survived without Mela. I was in jail for six weeks and Mela took care of everything, of the children and of getting me out. Until that time I was worried because she was always weak. But from that time when she had to do it on her own, she was strong. I know I couldn't have done it by myself.

Then came the Warsaw Uprising, when everyone thought the Soviet troops were just outside the city and about to liberate us. Our son, Yurek, was killed on the street by a Nazi sniper. He told Jacob that he was helping the Partisans, but he never told us that. It was a terrible time.

As I said, I thought the war would be finished in two or three months. We got the underground paper and it seemed good. But '43, '44, beginning of '45 were very tough years. You know it was terrible that the boys' aunts and grandmother wouldn't come with us, too. Three weeks after we took Jacob, the ghetto was liquidated and they went to Auschwitz.

So after the war we went to Berlin looking for Jacob and David's father. We found out they made it to Palestine, so we all wanted to go. But the British wouldn't let us go, only the boys. It was so hard to say goodbye to them. They had been with us for four and a half years, and two and a half of these had been so hard. So, in 1947, I had fine suits made for them, and they left.

Mela and I and our daughter, Mary, came to the United States. We wrote letters, so many letters, to David and Jacob, but we didn't get answers. I couldn't believe it! I said, "They were like our own sons, and they forget us!" But I think their father threw all our letters away. Then one day in about 1963, we were living in Queens and got a phone call from someone in Forest Hills, New York. He asked me, "Do you have a relative in Israel?" I was so excited I said, "Yes, Gutgelt, but

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they changed their names to Gilat." He said, "Maybe we'll see you tomorrow." And the next day, Jacob came. He was in California, studying for his Ph.D. at Berkeley. We talked and talked; he remembers everything.

He told us some old secrets: "You know, Uncle, when I went to you, Grandma said, 'Don't become a goy. Die with us together, because you will eat pork with the goys and die. Do not speak like the goy; they're different. Don't try to speak perfect.'" You know, the Jews spoke Polish with a Yiddish accent. "But then my Aunt Janke said, 'Jacob, don't listen to Grandma. She's old-fashioned.' And that was that."

A few years later David came to study for his doctorate, and we saw him. At first I didn't recognize him. I hadn't seen him in so long, and he had a beard. But then he threw his arms around me. That was in 1980. David is a mathematician and Jacob is a nuclear scientist. We didn't all get together again until 1981. Jacob and David asked us to come to Israel for Passover, and to get our medal from Yad Vashem, and plant a tree there. I was so happy that I had been able to keep my promise to Jacob.

It was a wonderful reunion. We all had Passover together, even the boys' father. We were there for twenty-one days. David took us to the north and Jacob took us to the south. I know Israel better than Poland. Israel is like a magnet. I like Israel ten times better than the United States.

You know, Rabbi Schulweis has been wonderful to me. People like him in the world maybe you can count on one hand. He invited us to California, he sent us a ticket to go to Israel, he got us $2,000 from Buffalo, and now we get $250 every month from the foundation in New York.

The man who owns this building where we live gives us our apartment for less ent. So I told my wife—this is no joke—"Schulweis is like mother and this man is ike father. I have two support people." I play the lottery, and if I win I will split it with Schulweis. Sometimes he calls me and I cry when I hear his voice on the phone.

When I look back on those times I think that maybe there were so many anti-Semites in Poland because there were so many Jews who did well in business and the Poles were jealous. In this country, if something happens, nobody helps you. In my building everybody has a car, but many people are very old and can't drive anymore, but no one gives them a ride to go shopping. I never go shopping without taking someone with me.

The best years of my life were when I first came to Warsaw and became successful in business. And then I was so happy when I brought Jacob home. No one was paying me, but I felt I was doing something great. I thought, *If I survive this, I've done something great.*

Alex during the interview, 1988.

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